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THE NEW REPUBLIC

July 23, 1977 Price 75 cents

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TRB

from Washington ®
July 23, 1977

Grinning Along

No wonder they come to see Jimmy Carter, they are trying to size him up. Helmut Schmidt last week and Menahem Begin this week. Leonid Brezhnev over in Moscow refuses to hold a conference but wonders more and more huffily what it's all about. What kind of a man is this grinning American President? He doesn't fall into any normal category; he is tough but thin-skinned; he takes risks but skirts confrontations; he breaks out unexpectedly in different places—drops the B-1 as he grabs the guided missile, agrees fatalistically that it's easier for rich women to get abortions than for poor women but dismisses it with born-again morality: life never was fair between rich and poor. Then he's off for a quick trip to Yazoo City.

It's breath-taking. Helmut Schmidt would be glad if Carter could go just a mite easier on human rights. It's hard enough trying to placate those Russians without prodding them up. And West Germany, France, Belgium, Holland and Italy, he says, are going ahead with their nuclear breeder reactors even if the United States holds back.

Then comes thin, small, intense Likud Party leader and Prime Minister Begin: he's waited 29 years to take power and, at 63, has just had a severe heart attack and more recent hospitalization. What will he make of Carter? What will Carter make of him? They both know the Bible. But the Bible has many connotations. "And I will give you the land of Israel," says Ezekiel 11:17. Did that promise of God include the Sinai, the Golan Heights? Mr. Begin has described the Gaza and the West Bank as "the inalienable legacy of our forefathers." He has taken office more recently than Carter. How much flexibility is there in this tough, brave, devout former guerilla fighter?

This is one of the chanciest meetings in the Carter incumbency. There is an element of improvisation, of amateurishness in Carter diplomacy. He publicly admits that he had not expected the Kremlin to react so harshly to his human rights drive. The drive began almost as a ploy, now it has taken on a life of its own. Can the President handle the Middle Eastern situation with more knowledgeable finesse that does not alienate either Arabs or Israelis? On the eve of Begin's arrival Carter disclosed that President Sadat of Egypt had promised to withdraw "extra troops" from the Sinai Peninsula and make other gestures designed to encourage peace. The President used his press conference announcement to stress once again that he is assuming that both sides will go to the proposed Geneva peace conference "without prior commitments." He has emphasized this to such a degree that he is charged with tilting against Israel. It is an emotional issue in the United States. "The world isn't used to your open diplomacy," chided Rabbi Alexander Schindler who came with 52 other Jewish leaders to see the President at White House invitation in order to smooth things over: "It stiffens the back of Israel and raises expectations of the Arabs which, once frustrated, will retard rather than bring peace." The Carter approach is "defective," says columnist Joseph Kraft, who cites the President's "explicit inclusion" of a Palestinian homeland in his proposal.

Others disagreed. Typical editorial (*St. Louis Post-Dispatch*): "The most alarming example of the new [Begin] government's tone appears in the repeated references to the occupied West Bank as 'liberated' territories which are to be annexed as 'Judea and Samaria.'" Background for the negotiations is the ominous fact that there have been four Arab-Israeli wars in 30 years, the interval shortening between each.

Huffy reaction in the Kremlin to enigmatic and irritating Carter has grown chillier. Washington supposes (and prays) that this will stop short of a return of the Cold War. The President himself shows understandable irritation at the barrage of *Pravda* taunts directed against him. This is a period of "disagreement, probing and debate" with Moscow, he told last week's press conference. He specifically expressed confidence that the era of open hostility won't return. Yet he warned, "The public statements that the Soviets make attacking me are both erroneous and ill-advised."

He brushed off Pat Moynihan's belligerent charge that Russian eavesdrop-

(continued on page 36)

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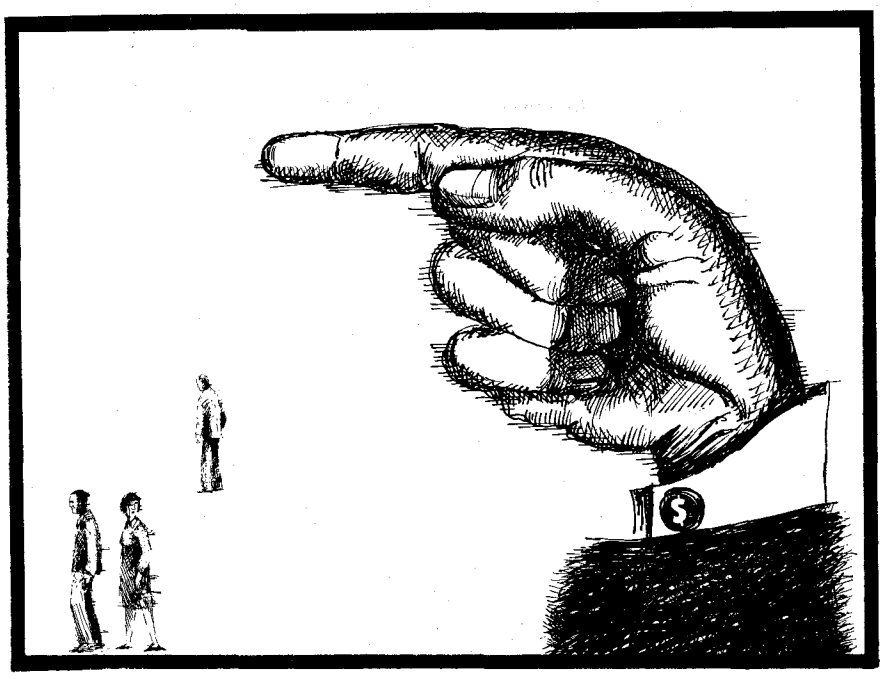

"The latest treatment for mental patients: Turn them out."

"Twenty years ago, California had 55,000 mental patients. Today, there are 7,000. New York had 84,000 in 1964; now the number is 38,000. And in the last 17 years, Massachusetts has released 17,000 mental patients.

These states didn't discover a miracle cure for mental illness. They found a way to throw mental patients out into the streets: They call it 'deinstitutionalization', a political cure for the states' mental health responsibility.

The way deinstitutionalization is supposed to work, people are removed from overcrowded state facilities and placed in smaller private centers in the community.

Unfortunately, it doesn't work that way. All too often, states don't put up the funds for community care. Even if funds are made available, communities resist having the patients placed in their midst. And the ill are turned out into the streets.

We represent thousands of public mental health workers, and we support better mental care, no matter if it's in community or state centers. What does matter is guaranteeing the dignity of the mentally ill through real care, not empty promises."

"The business of government is people."

—**Jerry Wurf,** President

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Correspondence

How we would behave

To the editors:

In "Drawing The Line" (*TNR*, June 4) David Fromkin talks of analysis of Soviet military doctrine indicating that in the event of war the Russians would be likely to launch a blitzkrieg that would get them to the English Channel in 48 hours, presenting us with a fait accompli to which we could either acquiesce or threaten to use our nuclear might to blow up everything, us included. He ends the paragraph with, "The Russians may not regard this as a plausible threat." I would. And I strongly urge the Russians to regard it as far more likely than not in such a circumstance.

Anyone even slightly familiar with our national psyche knows that we have no capacity for accepting or dealing with helplessness. If put in a position where we had to choose between feeling our own helplessness (especially when we were not, in technical terms, militarily helpless) and acting out our rage and going down (our) showing "them" that we aren't helpless and that no one can tell us what to do, it seems by no means implausible that we would choose the latter. It would be, in fact, much more in keeping with our nation's character to do so. Not only would it be more consistent with the American struggle, it would be infinitely easier to deal with—a simple and final outburst of self-righteous assertion. We do not seem to be able to tolerate difficult, complex, long-term, disadvantageous situations. We would be strained—beyond our ability, I believe—not to "do something" about it.

Richard Block
Woodstock, New York

Abortion . . .

To the editors:

I was pleased to see the editorial "The Unborn and the Born Again" in the July 2 *New Republic*. It represents a startling advance beyond the usual "progressive" banality that a "woman has a right to control her own body."

The heart of your argument is that "there is clearly no logical or moral distinction between a fetus and a young baby." A somewhat cynical anti-abortionist friend of mine put it this way: infanticide is less hypocritical than abortion; at least one gets to examine the "merchandise."

But you didn't stop with the stunning recognition that the arguments for abortion also apply, say, to two-year olds (not fully developed, unable to subsist on their own, often unwanted). Arguments for abortion are generally variations of the *Playboy* philosophy: if it doesn't feel good, do it in.

Perhaps not all life is "sacred," as you say; certainly Hitler's life wasn't sacred. But the fetus—once known as the unborn child—has committed no capital crime. Once we begin to desacralize human life, we start down a road with no end.

The root problem of our time is not the denial of public funds for abortion. Rather, it is the distressing contempt for human life, especially the lives of those too small—or too weak—to defend themselves. Abortion and welfare: is it really a question of money? Should we not be dealing with the desire—the felt need—for abortions, be they in back rooms or in well-equipped hospitals?

Stephen R. Maloney
Bartlesville, Oklahoma

To the editors:

TNR in discussing the abortion issue has again been critical of the executive and legislative branches of government for falling prey to the special interests of a vociferous minority. Granted that "a majority of Americans . . . favors abortion on demand," there would seem to be more than just the proddings of a willful minority at work to explain recent legislative and judicial decisions on abortion.

When we are forced into a position of defining and legislating morality, especially at a time when congressmen are accused of maintaining mistresses on government payrolls and liaisons of former presidents are made public, rational thinking flies out the window and a backlash Puritanism emerges. Men in power feel impelled to demonstrate "moral leadership" by refusing the right of abortion to poor women—women who are often black, young, unmarried, uneducated. Is it conceivable that such discrimination arises not only out of the desire to protect the fetus, which logically would then require the denial of abortion to all women, but also from the judgment that if you are poor, have sexual intercourse and an unwanted pregnancy occurs, the piper must be paid? Do legislators, mostly middle class with the wherewithal to finance an abortion, really want to make sex a matter of privilege? Will we ask a class of women to behave differently in their bedrooms, knowing they will not be allowed the same recourse as the more affluent? Perhaps it is time to stop making the poor pay a price we would not ask of ourselves.

Amy Zamkoff
Syracuse, New York

. . . and a 96th thesis

To the editors:

To say that the pro-abortion forces have "brought disaster upon themselves" in "The Unborn and the Born Again," shows a failure to grasp the political power that we are up against. How many legislators are willing to stand up and favor abortion, at the risk of offending their Catholic or fundamentalist voters? We have passion, but we are of many persuasions, and we are not feared politically.

By contrast, the anti-abortion lobby has a constant stream of money supplied by the Roman Catholic, and certain fundamentalist, churches whose congregations support this lobby, willingly or not, when they put money in the collection plate every week. What we are witnessing is the infiltration of our constitutional and political processes by the religious views of these churches—even though their thinking does not represent the majority in this country.

The involuntary bearing of children has always been the main factor in keeping a population large and poor. In those countries where the Roman Catholic Church continues to control the political system, the standard of living remains low—witness Spain, Portugal, Italy and South America. Many Catholics emigrate to the United States, and the church finds that it cannot control their sexual behavior through preaching. So the church wants to control them through the law. Why? This is no touching concern for unborn fetuses, but rather a measure to ensure that the flock ever increases in number,

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and therefore in political (voting) power.

Your statement that "there is clearly no logical or moral distinction between a fetus and a young baby" amazes me. Are you telling me there is no difference between the act of eating a fertilized egg for breakfast and going out and killing a chicken? If so, you are already subscribing to the abortion-is-murder theory, the end result of which would be that no doctor would perform an abortion.

Until recently, one of the world's most practiced methods of birth control was infanticide. Even this was regarded as a lesser crime than murder. One left the newborn by the side of the Ganges, or dumped it in New York's East River—even when Margaret Sanger first worked there. To me, abortion is a great *moral* improvement on this. Perfect contraception is even better—something which the Roman Church has done nothing to bring about.

By my moral code, and religious belief, a human being starts to have rights when it is born, and not before. That is the moment at which it becomes a conscious individual, independent of its mother. Its individual status is ratified by its birth certificate, and it is checked in as a member of society, and comes under the rule and the protection of the law. A person's age is measured from his birthday, not his conception day. Any departure from this will create horrendous legal problems.

Kate M. Field
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Good and bad terrorism

To the editors:

Eric Breindel's elaborate arguments that certain terrorist murders weren't really all that bad because they only occurred in "isolated instances" or because "acts of terror were not central to Irgun strategy" are repulsive ("Begin Without Smears," *TNR*, June 18).

Anyone suggesting murder as an acceptable instrument for gaining "specific concessions" from an alien regime must inhabit a world of abstraction unpopulated by living human beings. What a pity for one so young and fortunate to be so removed from humanity.

Michael D. Murphy
Corvallis, Oregon

(continued on page 36)

Pruning as a means to more nearly perfect wines.

To us, pruning—the cutting off of parts of the grapevine during the winter dormant period—is the single most important practice in the entire culture of grapes.

It is a complex and highly judgmental operation that not only controls the amount of crop our vines will bear, but also controls the quality of the ultimate contribution that crop will make to our wines.

That is why, we do not consider a man thoroughly experienced until he has been pruning for at least three years.

Why We Prune

The whole purpose of pruning is to direct our vines to grow fewer but better grapes—grapes of optimum maturity and with the full potential of their variety.

Vines which produce too many grapes—a condition called overcropping—can lead to a thin, watery wine.

A carefully pruned vine will produce grapes that have acid and sugar contents in perfect balance, and their wine will be full-bodied, deep and brilliant in color, and with a bouquet that is true to the grape.

Our Unique Next Step

Sometimes, despite judicious pruning, a vine will overproduce anyway—perhaps because of optimum conditions for exceptional fruitfulness, or because it did not produce as much as it should have in the previous year.

In such a case, we resort to thinning.

Thinning involves the actual removal of whole grape clusters from the vine—the sacrificing of a part of our crop in order to ensure the quality of the rest.

Sometimes this can mean removing as much as one-third the crop from an overproducing vine in order to maintain vine vigor. Or all of it, if we wish to give the vine a rest to regain its vigor.

Gallo, we might point out, is one of the very few wineries to practice this costly technique of thinning in order to produce only the best possible wine grapes.

How We Prune

Pruning is basically an art. And over the years we have developed techniques that we believe provide the best possible results of that art.

We began researching and establishing our pruning practices in the 1940's.

At that time, every single variety of grape was given its own program to determine the best method of pruning for that particular vine.

As a result of our tests, we have established some general rules.

One, is that on each spur—that part of the new wood which remains after pruning—we never leave more than two buds for future growth. This ensures optimum grape quality.

We do, however, vary the number of spurs on each vine. This depends on the variety.

For example, the Chenin Blanc and Ruby Cabernet vines are allowed not more than twelve spurs, the French Colombard fourteen, and the Barbera ten.

In general, the varieties having larger grapes and grape clusters are left with fewer spurs so as not to tax them beyond their capacities, and the varieties having smaller grapes and grape clusters are left with more.

Who Prunes

Because so much depends on the judgment of our pruners—in addition to how much to cut, at what angle, and which wood—we treat their training very seriously.

At first, a beginner is only allowed to watch. Then he is permitted to work only when an experienced man is watching him. And finally, before working independently, he must work under a foreman.

That is why, as mentioned earlier, it is usually three years before we consider him a thoroughly experienced pruner.

Our Goal

Obviously, the reason we here at the Gallo Vineyards are so particular about pruning is the direct relationship it has with wine quality.

Our experience is that excellent wines can only be made from excellent grapes, and that perfect wines require perfect grapes.

Therefore, because our goal is to make the finest wines possible—to give you pleasure by bringing you only the fullest perfection of flavor, taste and bouquet—we are totally committed to growing and using only the best quality grapes.

That insistence on perfection, really, is the basic principle to which we have dedicated our wine-making lives.

Gallo Vineyards, Modesto, California

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

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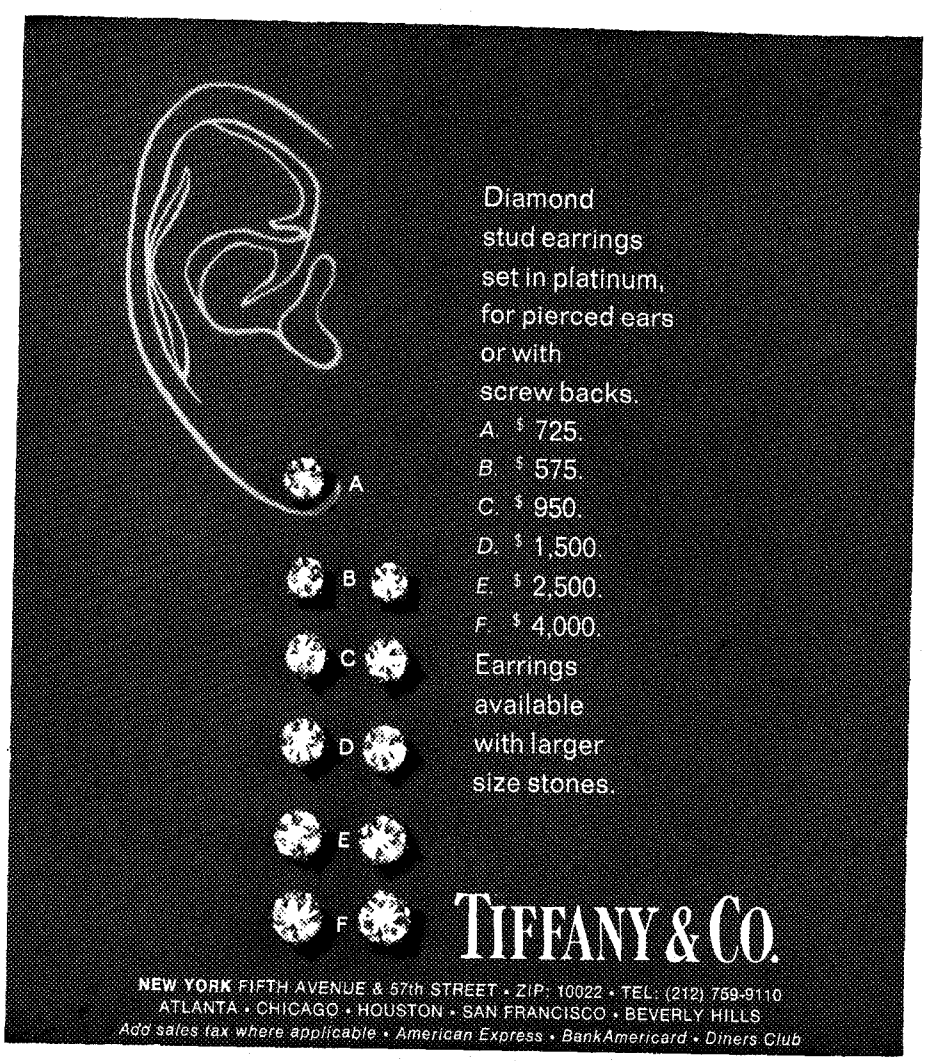

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

July 23, 1977

Carter Faces the Russians

Resolute though President Carter seeks to appear on television, there are signs that the Soviet Union's campaign of vituperation against him is beginning to rattle the administration. A day hardly goes by without a blast in umbrage from Moscow. The Soviet scowls have scared various European leaders and American politicians and commentators into pressuring Carter to back away from his human rights stand and to water down US strategic arms proposals. He seems to be doing both. When the Soviets rejected Carter's comprehensive SALT proposal—admittedly it was tough, even one-sided—the administration did not insist on a Soviet counter-proposal. Our side retreated to another position that would relieve the Soviets, for now at least, of any need to contemplate significant reduction in their existing missile arsenals. The administration also has been quiet for weeks about stepped-up Soviet pressure on internal dissidents. In fact, in a statement that amounted to an admission of error, Carter told a group of editors he had not expected his human rights statements to cause the Soviets so much apparent displeasure. The administration virtually begged Soviet leader Brezhnev for a face-to-face meeting, only to be spurned. And high-level US officials leaked an upbeat account of their big study of the US-Soviet strategic balance, apparently to assure the Soviets that this administration does not share the alarmist, accusatory assessment of Russian capabilities and intentions President Ford and his Defense Secretary and CIA Director left behind.

We are also perplexed and disappointed by Carter's seeming unconcern about Soviet bugging of the telephone calls of American citizens here in the United States. Just as we seem to be winning our domestic civil liberties fight to keep the FBI, the CIA and local police from bugging and tapping Americans without compunction, the President all but gave permission in his July 12 press conference for the Russians and other foreign governments to listen where they can.

We doubt that these apologies, withdrawals, concessions and invitations to rendezvous will serve to set US-Soviet relations on any constructive course. Firm, resolute, self-confident—most of all, consistent—behavior on Carter's part may do so. Alas, too much of the administration's foreign policy conduct conveys an impression of uncertainty and vacillation. Middle East diplomacy is the worst example. Carter in March set forth clear, sound and fair principles for American peacemaking efforts, but he has been confusing everyone since then—and damaging his own credibility—by issuing refinements and embellishments, then retractions and corrections that seem to favor whichever party's prime minister, president, king, prince or pressure group happens to be visiting the White House on a given day.

In US-Soviet relations, we agree with Carter's assessment at his July 12 press conference that the Soviets are, indeed, "exaggerating the disagreements" they have with the United States, and they are doing it precisely for "some political reason." They want the President to shut up about their violations of the Helsinki agreement and to agree to a SALT package that allows them to keep building up their missile forces. Carter said on television he has "no apologies to offer" and "no regrets" about the controversial issues he has raised. We hope the administration's performance in diplomacy will match its resolve on television.

In military procurement policy, meanwhile, Carter has shown steady good judgment. His decisions not to deploy the B-1 bomber, to speed deployment of air-launched cruise missiles and to go ahead with initial production of neutron bombs all show that Carter has his strategic and economic priorities in order. The mission intended for the B-1—taking out secondary targets in the Soviet Union during a nuclear war—can be handled more cheaply and effectively by existing B-52s and by jumbo jets equipped with drone missiles than by B-1s costing $102 million each. Carter also masterfully disarmed proponents of the B-1 by letting on he was on their side, only to leave them gasping

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when he announced his rejection of the system.

After a wayward start into the ethics of killing people and sparing their real estate, the neutron bomb debate finally centered on the right issue: should we build a small, "clean" nuclear weapon with a kill radius of 200 yards, that we might use if the Soviets invade Western Europe, in hopes that the Soviets will be deterred from attacking at all? Or, should we stick with more destructive tactical nukes, in hopes that, if war starts, each side refrain from employing nuclear weapons? Carter decided, tentatively anyway, that a weapon that deters war and limits destruction is better than one which deters only its use. We concur.

The Soviets have been howling steadily about Carter's arms decisions, even though many of them show evidence of self-restraint. Carter has cut the defense budget by $2.7 billion—and $30 billion over five years—from the levels recommended by the Ford administration. This administration also decided to forego construction of additional Minuteman land-based missiles and postponed advanced development of a mobile US super-missile, the MX. The Soviets need only read their American newspapers to realize that the administration is under pressure from hardliners to push ahead with the MX which, with new high-accuracy warheads, would give this country greatly improved ability to knock out Soviet missiles in a war. The Soviets have not shown parallel restraint in building missile-killing weapons. Unless both sides do so, in the 1980s there will be an incentive for each nation to be the first to fire in a crisis, in order to avoid having its own rockets destroyed in the ground.

President Carter advised the Soviets at the beginning of his administration that he intended only to protest their human rights violations and would not take reprisals in any other phase of US-Soviet relations. This is another example of US self-restraint that has gone unmatched by the Soviet Union, which never in the past felt restrained in criticizing the inequities of capitalism or the iniquities of imperialism. It is about time that the Soviet Union stopped badgering Carter and got on with the business of detente.

Politics returns to the postal service, with a vengeance.

Citizen Bailar

Who do President Carter and Benjamin Franklin Bailar, our Postmaster General, think they're trying to kid with their proposed "citizen's rate" for first-class mail? Carter proposed, and Bailar concurred with unseemly haste, that the mail rate for businesses go up to 16 cents, while "citizens" (defined as those willing to write out by hand either the mailing or the return address) continue to pay the hoary old 13 cent rate we've enjoyed for the past year and a half. Common business sense would suggest exactly the opposite policy. Not only is uniform, computerized business mail cheaper to process than individual letters; businesses also are more likely to find alternative ways of sending their messages if the cost of using the Postal Service increases. But the citizen's rate is a political device intended to anesthetize most people to the continuing collapse of the Postal Service.

One of the reasons for the Postal Reorganization Act of 1970 was to take the business of rate making out of politics, to create an independent Postal Rate Commission that, secure from the winds of political interests, would serenely come up with rates established with a dispassion and disinterest worthy of a philosopher king. There has seldom been a faster acceptance of any scheme by the government postal corporation, supposedly an independent body, than the "citizen rate," with so little regard for the consequences. The Postal Rate Commission now will have the opportunity to conduct months of hearings before approving the new arrangement, *ex post facto*. How much will this cost and who will pay for it? About 14 percent of the 10 billion pieces of mail are between individuals and 40 percent are "transactions" such as the payment of bills and banking activity. What percent of that will be at the 13 cent rate? In considering the new rates being presented to the Rate Commission, the Postal service has included in its project costs for the fiscal year beginning on April 1 such items as a $600 million contingency fund to help gird it for a new union contract next year. The Office of Management and Budget wisely is not talking about adding any more public monies to the postal service at this time, hoping to keep a brake on the wage demands of the increasingly militant postal unions. But more money will be needed from somewhere.

The proposed rate increase for second class (dear to the hearts of magazines and newspapers) is 29 percent, coming on top of the annual 20 percent increases provided by the 1970 postal legislation. And to the extent that the "citizens rate" cuts into annual postal revenues (now around $15 billion), it is likely that increases elsewhere in the postal rate spectrum will be even more than those now proposed.

All this fooling around comes at a time when the Postal Service is increasingly threatened by competition from electronic media of communication. When the Postal Service recommends new and higher rates, it gives little thought to where this will lead the postal system. The House Postal Committee plans hearings next week on the questions of whether the job of Postmaster General should again be made a presidential appointment (an issue muted by Bailar's fast support of Carter's citizen's stamp), whether the government subsidy should be raised to 15 percent of

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the previous year's operating budget, whether the Postal Service Board of Governors should be abolished. All fairly tame stuff, business as usual. President Carter has said nothing yet. Others are looking ahead. The American Bankers Association, for example, will release a report at the end of this month on what impact electronic banking, bill payments through banks and so on will have on the postal system. The citizen's stamp should have one positive virtue; it should be a good collectors item, for its longevity will depend on many other interlocking governmental decisions which aren't being made.

Robert J. Myers

AA is for Affirmative Action, not Alcoholics Anonymous.

Fair Play for Drunks

The Labor Department this month came to the defense of a new category of oppressed citizens, a rather large subgroup of the population of the downtrodden. These are drunks and drug users, henceforth to be regarded as handicapped people under the provisions of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. It is a stigma greatly to be desired if you are applying for a federal or federally funded job, as anyone who has filled out a Civil Service form ought to know. Those who qualify are entitled to protection and attention not given to the average citizen. In the case at hand, the Labor Department has asked that companies doing business with the government launch aggressive "affirmative action" plans to see to it that handicapped people—including alcoholics and drug addicts—are sought out, hired and promoted. The Department of Health, Education and Welfare has a similar arrangement for recipients of federal grants, such as schools and universities, though it does not require affirmative action. HEW simply forbids discrimination.

Bonnie Spellane, the spokeswoman for the Labor Department's Employment Standards Division, claimed that the new policy is not meant to favor the handicapped, but to put employers on notice that they will be punished if they refuse to hire "qualified" handicapped people, including drunks and addicts. That means, one assumes, that if two equally qualified candidates for a job appear on the doorstep, one of them drunk, the government would prefer to see the drunk hired. One must also file written affirmative action plans with the Labor Department, explaining in detail how addicts, both retired and active, will be sought out and hired. HEW, which only insists on non-discrimination, would ask the director of admissions at a university to flip a coin to choose between the qualified addict and the abstainer. But even this neutral method of selection may be inadequate in the long run, for the final test of non-discrimination is always in the statistics. An insufficient number of handicapped students would be a sign of bad faith.

All of this requires that employers and admissions officers keep extensive records so that they can defend themselves against charges of sobriety chauvinism. A rejected applicant has the right to sue if he or she feels discriminated against, and the government will lend a hand if it believes the case is valid. This record-keeping does not put a tremendous burden on big schools and corporations, because they keep meticulous records for other reasons. But it is a burden for smaller ones that can't afford computers or battalions of clerks.

There is another, considerably larger cost built into the program. It derives from a section of the regulation that requires federal contractors to remove barriers that may impede the handicapped. Public agencies, contractors and even private universities are now in the process of building new elevators and ramps to accommodate wheel chairs. Washington, DC—the federal city—seems to be installing ramps at every street intersection, including busy ones with no traffic lights where even the nimble fear to tread. Arthur D. Little, Inc., a think tank used by federal agencies, has hired an interpreter for the deaf to accompany one of its thinkers on trips. The trend leads to intriguing possibilities. Will similar accommodation be made for drunks? Will college lecture halls be required to have a saloon lounge and addicts' nook in addition to ramps and elevators? At the very least, will treacherous objects such as furniture be removed by law from the path of the working drunk?

It is easy to mock, as Spellane of the Labor Department will remind us in due course. Nevertheless, the government does seem to have adopted a broad definition of the term "handicapped." The working guidelines, according to Spellane, are as follows: included are "persons who (1) have a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities, (2) have a record of such impairment, or (3) are regarded as having such an impairment." That leaves some room for interpretation.

The government decided to include alcoholics and drug addicts in the category because employers tend to discriminate against them, even after they've been cured. (But the Labor Department will not ask that they be cured before defending them.) There is another motive at work here that may be more important. It is the fact that the federal government has already invested "an incredible amount of money," in Spellane's words, to rehabilitate and train addicts for normal jobs. "It would make no sense to turn around and say, 'You can't have a job'" after spending so much on them. So

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the government, following a closed internal logic, doubles its investment. Having spent a bundle on alcoholism and drug addiction in the clinic, it now intends to do the same in the admissions and personnel offices. It's a noble gesture; that is about all one can say.

The federal experts who interpret this law insist that it will not give alcoholics and addicts an advantage over the abstemious. The government will simply ask that a candidate's worth be considered without regard to personal habits, addictions or impairments. It is described as a purely defensive policy, to be invoked only when a company actively discriminates against the handicapped. That may be the intention, but as the government steps up enforcement, which Spellane says it will do very soon, employers may go headhunting to capture their share of qualified addicts.

Eliot Marshall

It's not OK.

Dying in Oklahoma

The heat always rules this country. In December a dry winter wind uncoils out of the New Mexican mountains and sweeps away the heavy air. Fronts of soiled white clouds, vast phantom escarpments, pause for a while over the plain. But summer is always there, just behind. Everybody feels it waiting in the distance. At Christmas, when the rest of America is buying ski jackets and hanging calendars, the farmers here are getting new straw hats, and JC Penny's features three-speed fans for the natives, who know that the cool greyness of winter is only an interval.

Then, in a few weeks, the sun suddenly is back, overrunning a March morning. It drives plants and animals into the cracks of the red clay. The people go for cover too. They flee the sky in roadside joints where the metallic air is too cold, and the floor forever smells of pine disinfectant and spilt Coors. They retreat into little cinderblock houses standing treeless and vulnerable around towns with names like Ponca City or Muskogee or Sulpher. But they have to come out eventually, of course. Oklahoma has no lasting refuge from the sun.

Everything is not quite "OK" here, as the license plates advertise. Not for most of the nearly three million people who live here, whose per capita income still is far below the national average despite the vast corporate wealth of giant ranches and the old oil leviathans around Tulsa and Oklahoma City. Not much of the state's wealth ever has gone to its inhabitants. In a sense, it has always been one of America's expendables: Oklahoma, you'll remember, was one of those last barren corners of the continent we were willing to leave to the Indians, though not for long. It is not an especially charming place for living, or for dying. And I am here to watch an old friend die.

One of the main problems here with death is the cemeteries. They are in a conspiracy with the sun. They are always there along the roads, and always the same. Through black wrought-iron gates peeling in the heat, the "Garden of Remembrance" or "Portal of Heaven" is a scrubby, scorched acreage. The markers lie in patterns determined by the luck of door-to-door salesmen. The plastic flowers fade and melt. The upturned sod goes hard and withered after only a day in the sun. My friend doesn't want to go to one of those, but he doesn't want to be cremated either. I don't know what we are going to do.

Another problem is that he has suddenly become a stranger. His cheeks are sucked hollow by the sarcoma in his stomach, and his features are only a rubbery intimation of the person I knew. The people going by in the hospital hall are more familiar. They have the kind of faces that cake on your memory. Pinched, darkened profiles below the hatline, they are a race who were passed by as the rest of their countrymen grew pale and fleshy. Some of them now wear knit pants and white plastic shoes, but they are the same as they were 40 years ago, eyes squinting against a glare they carry everywhere.

Half-sunburned, half-squinting people have been walking here in this hospital since the Baptists built it decades ago. It was worse to be dying then, I suppose. Life ran out behind faded awnings, on hard-edged steel beds with stained gauze, and ceiling fans powerless to lift the sweltering air. It is different now, cooler, longer, the edges softened. But no easier to notice.

There are several fine books on the subject, to help us as a society deal with our autistic dread of death. But they have not converted much of Oklahoma. The air of endings here is still motionless, and mostly unseen. But then it is not so different from the dingy corridors of the East. Take the Metroliner through Baltimore or Wilmington, and dying is going on there too, nicely hidden behind hospital walls and someone else's grief.

Oklahoma never bothered to conceal much besides suffering and mortality. I always will remember the big billboard I saw as a child when I visited Blackwell in 1949. "Welcome to Blackwell, Oklahoma," it read in huge letters. And then in clear if unpunctuated lettering along the bottom: "Nigger don't let the sun set on you here." Most of the state got over that disgrace, though "Little Dixie" in southern Oklahoma, Carl Albert's old district, still is a stronghold of bigotry and some of the slickest separate but equal schools in the land. Like the rest of us, Oklahoma is having more trouble with the next installment of freedom, called economics.

My friend doesn't worry about that now. He has had

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his share of being screwed, by government as well as private interests. But he has been variously content, or resigned, to accept it—the great American institution of cynicism, which enables us to elect Richard Nixon, tolerate Jimmy Carter's hokey corporatism, and forget about other people dying.

My friend is puzzled by the dreary litany of television news, most of all the energy shortage. His Oklahoma was a place of roads and going, a land to be traveled among rising pumps showering oil. I recall a picture of him standing next to a convertible with a white Dalmatian. He looks about to gesture the dog into the car and speed off for the panhandle, a fellow with plenty of gas in his Chrysler, not thinking much about politics or dying. Both—for similar reasons of defeat, I guess—are hard for Americans to face honestly.

The last night with him, I am in the grip of the place, like the people who live here. I look out the night window and imagine derelict cars rusting in dry river beds, and I swear I can hear wooden screen doors banging sharply in some hot afternoon silence.

The dawn is already up on his final day. Impatient with ignored deaths, the Oklahoma sun pierces the window, breaches the sill, and lies in a lengthening linoleum pool at the foot of his bed, waiting.

Roger Morris

Uncertain Greatness, Roger Morris's book on Henry Kissinger, will be published soon.

Carter does it for free.

Two Milk Duds

In Jimmy Carter's campaign promise book there is an item under "M" that can be marked completed. One of the Carter Administration's first acts was to increase milk price supports to nine dollars per hundredweight of milk (11.5 gallons) from $8.26 per hundredweight.

Milk price supports also went up during the Nixon Administration. In that case the increase was explicitly the result of a large contribution to the Nixon campaign by the dairy cooperatives. There is no evidence of chicanery in the current price support decision, but there the dissimilarity ends. The milk producers didn't have to bribe Jimmy Carter to get what they wanted. In both cases the officials normally concerned with such matters opposed raising milk support prices because of the predictable inflationary effect.

In 1971, Agriculture Secretary Clifford Hardin announced that the milk support price would be held at $4.66. Distressed dairymen pledged two million dollars to the Nixon re-election campaign (of which $632,500 was received). Twelve days after Hardin's announcement the milk support price was raised to $4.93.

The Democratic process of price support boosts is only slightly more subtle. Wisconsin was a crucial state in Jimmy Carter's election. In a departure from traditional voting patterns, Northern Wisconsin dairymen tipped the state to the Democrats. Shortly before the election, Carter, Wisconsin Senator Gaylord Nelson and Representative David Obey sent a letter to the farmers promising that a Carter Administration would not allow milk price supports to drop, as had been happening under the Ford Administration. So Carter owed the dairymen, and he paid up. Carter's own Council on Wage and Price Stability recommended that the milk support price be *lowered*, just before Agriculture Secretary Bob Bergland announced it would be raised. In both cases political considerations apparently overrode the dictates of sound policy.

It's difficult being a man of your word when you make conflicting commitments. In this case, Carter's promise to the public that he would do his best to hold down inflation was the one he broke. Because of this Carter decision, the public can expect to pay about a billion dollars in higher supermarket prices for dairy products and government purchases of surplus milk.

The purpose of milk price supports is to guarantee farmers a reasonable income on the milk sold. Taking the broader view, they are justified as stabilizing a volatile market, thereby keeping the milk industry alive and healthy and possibily lowering prices in the long run. The support price is the price at which the government will buy farmers' production of milk, to prevent the market price from going any lower. When the support price is raised, production increases, government purchases of surplus milk increase, and the retail cost of dairy products increases.

Great mystery surrounds the computation of the milk support price. Agriculture Department bureaucrats describe it as "complicated" or "very complicated" or "incredibly complicated," and supply documents and charts that amply prove their point. Like other farm support prices, the milk price is derived from a series of calculations referring back to an apparent golden age of agricultural prosperity in 1910 to 1914. General increases in the cost of living on a farm, and in the prices of agricultural products, are factored in.

One interesting thing that emerges from a comparison between Carter's milk decision and Nixon's is that without anyone's paying much attention the support price has gone from $4.66 in 1971 to nine dollars today. Nobody seems able or willing to explain why the government-supported wholesale milk price should have gone up 82 percent during a period when the general cost of living rose only 49 percent.

One explanation, driven home by the Nixon and Carter episodes, is that all the fancy calculus in the end has little to do with how the support price is set. The price of milk appears to be a political decision. Bergland is from a dairy state, milk cooperatives have been large

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contributors to his past congressional campaigns, Carter was grateful to the dairymen, so a "fair" milk support price is established. You don't have to be bribed to want to take care of your own.

The Council on Wage and Price Stability has produced a study that recommends considering an end to government regulation of the price of milk. At the very least, the government could save some money by unplugging the calculators now used to figure out what milk price supports should be. Let's just admit it's up to the administration's discretion.

Emily Yoffe

The Supreme Court tells
Dayton's buses to shift into reverse.

Conflicting Signals

Dayton, Ohio

US District Judge Carl B. Rubin lives in Cincinnati, works in Dayton and drives between the two every day in a mauve 1976 Cadillac with a two-way radio tuned to the frequency of the US Marshal Service. The marshals have standing orders to respond fast if Rubin calls for assistance on the drive.

Rubin, a diminutive bridge master appointed to the bench by Richard Nixon as a reward for running Bob Taft's 1970 Senate campaign, has lately been taking his personal safety very seriously. He has been observed to keep a revolver close to hand. Officials at the US Courthouse in Dayton joke that the reason it is so cold in Rubin's court is that the judge gets hot in his bullet-resistant underwear.

Such precautions and others, like the closed-circuit TV camera that guards the armored door to Rubin's chambers, would seem unreasonable, even somewhat eccentric, were it not for the major case on Rubin's docket, a school desegregation action brought by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People against the Dayton Board of Education.

The progress of the case through the courts has been attended by a combination of remarkable public restraint and a single incident of shocking violence. When the buses rolled last September between the predominantly white schools of the city's East Side and the black schools of the West, national publicity focused on the absence of trouble.

But the peace that characterized D-day may have been because Dayton had already had a desegregation bloodletting. A year earlier, Dr. Charles Glatt, appointed by Rubin to devise a plan for the desegregation of the schools, was gunned down in his office in Dayton's Old Post Office by a man who told a female Justice Department specialist sharing the same office: "God told me to do this."

Rubin has been saddled with this case for five years. He has the right to feel like a man abused. An extreme political conservative, he personally has no sympathy with forced busing to achieve school integration. Not once but twice his desegregation plans for the Dayton schools have been rejected by the circuit court of appeals as not going far enough. Then two weeks ago, in one of its last decisions before recessing for the term, the Supreme Court ruled that his latest version went too far.

The city of Dayton also has a right to feel abused. Last year it spent three million on buses and other expenses of the court-ordered desegregation plan. Furthermore, the effort was successful: the schools were peacefully integrated. It now is the first school district to be ordered to put its integrated schools back into court for further judicial action.

Superficially, Dayton has little to distinguish it. Not so large as Boston and less volatile than Louisville, the city operated a traditional neighborhood school system that reflected neighborhood segregation. Because the city's blacks were separated from whites by two rivers and a freeway, school attendance zones tended to follow geography.

The Supreme Court's pronouncement of June 27, an 8-0 decision with an opinion by associate justice William Rehnquist, was appropriately unextraordinary. It reaffirmed the authority of district courts to order system-wide busing, and reiterated the Court's developing philosophy that such remedies should be ordered only when justified by conscious government policy rather than mere historic patterns of segregation. The court didn't say what it wanted done in Dayton, only that it didn't like what had been done. The opinion, 14 pages in length, permitted both sets of lawyers to claim vindication—and left everyone wondering what would happen next.

What is disconcerting about the decision is that it comes after the schools had successfully integrated, at a time when the entire unsettling issue was beginning to be settled in Dayton. The decision parenthetically permitted Dayton to continue busing this fall. Yet by carefully neglecting to endorse or condemn the busing, it knocked away the authority of the plan. The conservative school board here is now discussing how to develop a whole new plan in the next eight weeks.

Wright State University President Dr. Robert J. Kegerreis, chairman of Rubin's desegregation advisory board, described the Supreme Court decision as the most confusing possible. "The knowledge that the plan is going to be substantially altered will cause people to have considerably less enthusiasm," he said.

In 1973 and again in 1975 the liberal US Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals in Cincinnati has upheld appeals from the NAACP that Rubin's plans had not gone far enough. The second time, the circuit sent the case back

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to Rubin with stern instructions to put kids on buses no matter what. Rubin obliged, ordering schools to reflect the racial composition of the school district, 60 percent white, 40 percent black. The plan necessitated busing 18,000 of the district's 40,000 students. The three million dollar cost of implementing the court's order was not one Dayton could easily afford. Dayton is not a wealthy city. And the school district, which until recently had been far less disorganized than those in many other urban districts, has suffered in other ways. Voters turned down a property tax increase for school finance, because of public resentment over the busing plan. A drop in enrollment of 4000 students last fall—attributed to white flight and swollen parochial school enrollment—has reduced the district's eligibility for state and federal funds, with the consequence that 200 teachers have been laid off. The schools experienced a doubling of disciplinary problems in the first year of desegregation—problems which teachers attribute to tension. One high school suspended or expelled 600 students. Three thousand other students were disciplined throughout the system.

Perhaps most ironic of all the busing ills is the sudden decision of the local contractor who owned the buses to go out of business. The buses are for sale and nobody even knows now whether they will be needed.

Clearly these difficulties, possibly only temporary, would be worth it if they were part of the cost of obtaining thoroughly integrated public schools. But now it appears that integration in Dayton, after five years, is back to square one. The real moral lesson does not concern the merits of busing to achieve integrated schools. The real lesson is that federal courts are not competent to run local public school systems, to achieve integration or for any other purpose.

Jonathan Miller

Jonathan Miller is a former reporter for the *Dayton Daily News*.

Dealing with an unwanted reminder.

Indochinese Refugees

Refugees from Indochina bring an unwelcome reminder of the war there and our part in it. This is the only explanation of the uncharacteristically hostile attitude many Americans and their government have adopted toward the unfortunate people.

Approximately 78,000 Indochina refugees are in camps in Thailand, living in horrible conditions. Two thousand live on perilously overcrowded boats offshore, having been denied landing privileges. An additional 4500 to 4800 "boat case" escapees are still out at sea searching for asylum. No one knows how many boatloads of people have been captured or died in the attempt to escape.

Having fled new Communist regimes in Southeast Asia, the refugees have been seeking entry to any country that will provide a haven. Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, the Philippines and Thailand refuse to offer anything more than temporary sanctuary, and that grudgingly. These governments fear tensions between the refugees and their own citizens. There are no rewards in being a refuge for the homeless. An unidentified businessman in Japan told *The New York Times* that Japan could not afford to admit refugees because that might complicate its relations with Hanoi. It is a consideration that also inhibits other countries. Thailand, its camps already filled, will not make room for new refugees, nor for that matter, improve the lot of those already there. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees is sending food and supplies to Thailand, but the situation remains desperate.

France, Canada, Australia, Switzerland, West Germany, Belgium and Austria, have admitted some refugees. Israel also opened its doors, almost by reflex, to those whose fate does not much concern the world. The United States, after the fall of Saigon in 1975, established a Special Parole Program to assist refugees wishing to leave Southeast Asia and resettle here. 130,000 Indochinese, mostly from Vietnam, were brought into this country under that program. Then in 1976, under an Expanded Parole Program, 11,000 more refugees entered the US. Since that time, despite continued need, the United States has only accepted a trickle of 100-to-300 refugees per month.

Distraught Vietnamese escapees wonder why Americans, who seemed interested in their country for so long, have not received them more readily. We Americans might well wonder too. Many of the Vietnamese seeking admittance to this country were associated with the Americans during the war and, if only for their own safety, felt compelled to leave home after the Communist takeover. Others, though uncommitted to any political group, left Vietnam to escape increasing restrictions on their liberty and forced "re-education" in Communist camps. Refugees from the new Laos and Cambodia are fleeing barely imaginable horrors. Given the US role in the destruction of Indochina, we bear the burden of responsibility for these refugees. Ironically, America's traditional welcome for refugees in the past has been especially warm when they came from Communist countries. Why change now?

The State Department has requested the emergency admission of 15,000 Indochinese refugees. This gesture will not significantly relieve the crisis, since 1500 new

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refugees leave Indochina each month. Senator Kennedy, chairman of the Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on Immigration, has urged President Carter to allow the Attorney General to admit refugees with an unlimited ceiling, which the administration can do by invoking emergency powers under the Immigration Act. Such an act of generosity, in addition to relieving the crisis, might encourage other countries to follow the US example.

All of the 146,000 Indochinese refugees admitted to this country so far have gone through normal processes of immigration. The Health, Education, and Welfare Task Force on Refugees, set up by the Ford administration when the initial wave of Indochinese refugees came to the US, has been in charge of their resettlement. Government programs coordinated with national volunteer agencies have assisted the refugees in learning the language, job training and placement, and other aspects of resettlement. According to Task Force official Walter Martindale, the Indochinese refugees have generally been taking jobs that American workers have refused. Since they are subject to the law the refugees, unlike illegal aliens, cannot be paid substandard wages that lower earning power for other workers. Even if the proposed entry of 15,000 more Indochinese refugees were granted, the total number of Indochinese in this country (160,000) would be insignificant in comparison to the million or so illegal aliens, and would have a negligible effect on unemployment figures.

Even illegal aliens fare better in this country than refugees seeking entrance through normal immigration procedures. Once an illegal alien has entered the country, he or she is entitled to a court hearing before being evicted. Free legal aid usually is available. No alien is automatically deported. Indochinese refugees seeking entrance into the United States have no such rights.

Opponents of the effort to admit more Indochinese refugees seem to think this issue is somehow connected to the illegal alien problem. Joshua Eilberg, a Democratic representative from Pennsylvania and chairman of the Judiciary Committee's subcommittee on immigration, got a promise from the Ford administration that after the Extended Parole Program of 1976 no more refugees would be admitted under the President's emergency powers without further legislation. In addition, he is sponsoring legislation that would limit the Attorney General's parole authority to 5000 refugees a year. According to one of his aides, Eilberg's opposition stems from questions like, "Who are these people? What kind of monetary settlement will they require? How will the needs of more refugees be met?"

If the cause of Eilberg's concern really is questions like these, and not merely an undefined xenophobia, evidence is becoming available to reassure him. The cost of resettling each refugee, the State Department estimates, is about $1000. Critics of the program say this is only the beginning of the burden on the state. But their fears are exaggerated. After two years, the HEW Refugee Task Force reports that 64 percent of the Indochinese refugees in the US are entirely independent of government aid. Of the remaining 36 percent, only 13.6 percent are solely dependent on refugee cash assistance or other government payments. Although problems of family separation, underemployment, and "culture shock" continue to plague refugees, their adaptation to a new life has been surprisingly swift. Apparently the Indochinese who have overcome all the obstacles and made it to this country possess exactly those qualities of industriousness and self-reliance American mythology celebrates the most.

Along with opening that golden door to those waiting outside, everything possible should be done to improve the status of the Indochinese parolees already in the US. Legislation that would enable refugees to adjust their status from "parolee" to "permanent resident alien" is in committee in both the House and the Senate. The bills, if passed, would open wider employment and other opportunities to the Indochinese in this country and allow them to become more fully integrated into society.

Karen Keegan

Vladimir Nabokov, 1899-1977

Wisdom in Exile

Nabokov's death at 78 came as a shock. He had such majestic self-confidence in his genius, his learning, in Nabokov as a Russian, Nabokov as an American, Nabokov as novelist, translator, scholar, entomologist, sportsman, political skeptic, that no writer could have more enjoyed and trusted life. There was so much gaiety and pride in being Vladimir Vladimirovich Nabokov that I imagined him, like his mischievously Olympian alter ego in *Ada*, living, loving and sporting virtually forever—a centenarian and genius exuding the same airy and humorous power.

Nabokov *was* extraordinary. He had many strengths, unexpected resources in every department of life, amazing good fortune at birth. He was immensely, wildly, arrogantly talented; he was a wonderful looking man; his mind was at once ecstatic, meticulous, wildly humorous, fantastic, yet marked by rigorous intellectual devotion. Even his family circumstances had a legendary quality. He was the cherished first son in a St. Petersburg family (the *very best* Russian was spoken in St. Petersburg) of minor nobility that had produced many leading Russian statesmen but had a tradition of

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resisting Czarist obscurantism and race hatred. His father, V. D. Nabokov, had a special love for English literature and democratic tradition. Nabokov senior was a jurist and the publisher of a liberal paper. He went to jail briefly for opposing the Czar's dissolution of the Duma. He is supposed to have shown his contempt for authority by advertising his court uniform for sale. The novelist and his Jewish wife Vera were able to leave Hitler Europe for America in 1940 thanks to a Jewish relief organization that gratefully remembered the father's support of Russian Jewry.

V. D. Nabokov was shot to death by Russian Fascists in Berlin, 1922, while shielding the liberal politician Miliukov. The father's sacrifice added to the great family tradition which the son felt he was carrying out as a Russian writer in the emigration even when he wrote in English—as a scholar, teacher and unrelenting critic of the totalitarian thinking and practices that were to mark Lenin's influence on the century.

This moral legacy and confidence, like the famous devotion of the Nabokovs to one another, *seem* to be at variance with the novelist's reputation as a wilfully eccentric, perverse and obscure writer with a vaguely shady intent. His most famous and at one time "scandalous" book, *Lolita,* indeed was first published by the sex-obsessed Olympia Press in Paris. The novels Nabokov wrote in Russian and later translated into English (with his son Dmitri)—*Mary; King, Queen And Knave; The Gift; The Defense; Invitation To A Beheading*—the novels beginning with *The Real Life Of Sebastian Knight* he wrote in English—*Bend Sinister; Lolita; Pnin; Pale Fire; Ada*—still are bewildering to many readers, seemingly perverse in content and impish in style.

But Nabokov, the last of the great 20th century modernists, was at heart as deeply traditionalist as Proust, Joyce, Faulkner, Eliot. As we seem to know only now that the returns are in, modernism was experimental in technique and style, provocative in intent, as a protest against mass society and conformism. It was a revolt of individual genius against life without moral definition. There were Russian writers before 1917 whose experimentalism and impudence were their warning against mass standards and the intellectual dishonesty that followed from political authoritarianism in every sphere of Russian life.

Drawing by David Schorr

Modernism flourished in exile and expatriation. But no other "modern master" underwent such painful uprooting as Nabokov. In Germany, England, France, America, and finally Switzerland, Nabokov from the age of 20 sought to carry on the great pre-Soviet tradition of "advanced" art and free imagination. For more than 20 years he had to struggle for a livelihood as a tutor, Russian teacher, tennis coach, translator—what did he not do to keep his family alive! Yet he was steadily producing the novels that made him famous as "Sirin" to Russian readers and attacking every "cliche," his favorite enemy, in the melting of culture and politics. He constantly had to explain that most Russian intellectuals were in exile because they believed in democracy, not monarchism.

Nabokov's ruling faith as an artist was his hatred of the expected, of "mediocrity" (another favorite swear word), of that self-satisfaction in shoddy goods that more and more passes in American education and culture. His hero and hilarious superman Van in *Ada* says, "For him the written word existed only in its abstract purity, in its unrepeatable appeal to an equally ideal mind. It belonged solely to its creator and could not be spoken of or enacted by a mime without letting the deadly stab of another's mind destroy the artist in the very lair of his art."

The "deadly stab of another's mind" was something that the lordly Nabokov certainly resisted. He not so much rejected as mentally obliterated (*he* thought) Freud, Faulkner, Conrad, Camus, Pasternak, Solzhenitsyn—not to forget much of Dostoevsky! Nabokov was conceited enough to put down Einstein not just because of his sentimental pacifism but as a physicist. Yet Nabokov's onslaughts against so many

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other writers seems funny and *very* Russian. Imagine admiring *Ulysses* and not recognizing a so much more interesting *novel* that comes out of Joyce, *The Sound And The Fury*! Nabokov was never more Russian, in gamesmanship and argumentativeness, more perky, mocking, mischievous and excessive, than in the zeal he brought to winning over his contemporaries. He loved to put others down as "frauds"or—most destructive!—"not important."

Often enough he was right. And why in the world should genius be "nice," especially if you spend most of your life in exile, in resistance to so many popular delusions? The greatest delusion, Nabokov never ceased complaining, was that Soviet dogma and terror have any more transcendent purpose than keeping the gang in power. Nabokov knew with every instinct of his excellent mind and strict conscience that the "advanced" artist has to fight not only for recognition of his originality but against political superstition. A man of relentless mental energy, Nabokov always was outraged by minds that do not fight against the dominant "cliches." He thought that "cliches" stopped the world dead. He had an old Russian belief that the function of art is to open minds, to clear the air, to strip ourselves of all intellectual weakness.

How far Nabokov succeeded in realizing this in *all* his novels is not certain. Working against the grain, against the century, in pursuit of a beautiful private ideal that he hauntingly associated with a homesickness beyond repair, he wrote with the highest possible ambition for himself at a time when his love of surprising effects, of parody and intellectual "leaps," stunned the reader into more admiration of Nabokov's abilities than of his novels. His most obvious fault was an intellectual showiness and self-consciousness, especially in English, that bound the reader to Nabokov's own mind and personality. He was magnetic, irresistible, irreplaceable, endlessly fascinating; the technical wizardry so important to modernism became such a point of pride with Nabokov that it makes a book like *Ada* a brilliant bore. He wanted above all to be "an enchanter." He wrote some wonderful books, but much of his work is more that of a virtuoso than of an enchanter.

The talent, the sense of things, the power of imagination, were prodigious. You have only to see what Soviet writers in exile still gasp for to realize what Vladimir Nabokov enjoyed as his natural right. His long exile certainly helped. The emigration, he once said, was the only freedom that Russian writers ever have known.

Alfred Kazin

Alfred Kazin's most recent book is *Bright Book of Life: American Novelists & Storytellers from Hemingway to Mailer* (Atlantic Monthly Press).

Local Democrats recall why they didn't like Carter.

Discontent in Denver

Denver

If there is going to be an effort within the Democratic party to deny Jimmy Carter a second term in 1980—in effect, a "Dump Carter" movement—its first seeds were sown here last weekend.

The event was the third annual Conference of Alternative State and Local Public Policies. It attracted about 450 public officials, labor representatives, lobbyists and public interest advocates, community and neighborhood leaders from all over the country. The Conference's primary purpose is to provide a progressive, programmatic underpinning for state and local politics, to help activists and public officials view government at those levels as an instrument for social change. So, most of the group's four days together were spent in technical seminars sharing information about redlining, land use priorities, effective taxation of corporations and natural resources and redefining investment strategies for public money.

But so much of the tone and direction of all government is set in Washington that state and local priorities can't be viewed outside the federal context. So the mayors, councilmen, legislators and their colleagues devoted a large chunk of time to evaluating the unfolding priorities of the new Democratic Administration. In those sessions, Jimmy Carter took it on the chin.

Most of these people would classify themselves as liberal Democrats and a large majority cast a Carter ballot last November. Nevertheless, less than six months into the new Administration, it was a time for resurrecting pre-election reservations. "I was for Carter as a choice between Dr. Jekyll-Mr. Hyde and Mr. Hyde," said Barney Frank, a Massachusetts state representative from Boston's Back Bay area, perhaps the only man in America who can claim to have won election on George McGovern's 1972 coattails. "I am almost completely dissatisfied," Frank said. "Life under the Democrats is just like life under the Republicans except that Andy Young's indiscretions are morally preferable to Pat Moynihan's. The fundamental flaw with Carter is his total lack of commitment to do anything for poor people."

The most specific criticisms leveled at Carter were directed at his energy proposals. The principal accuser was Barry Commoner, professor at Washington University in St. Louis and author of *The Poverty of Power*. America is at an energy crossroads, Commoner argued, and the directions prescribed in the Carter program have the effect of freezing out future energy based on naturally renewable sources—wind, solar—in favor of

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oil and coal, first, and nuclear power later. The plan, peddled to the public as one of energy conservation, is a deception, Commoner contends, a Trojan Horse. Despite the President's claim that he opposes the breeder reactor, energy practically requires it. Without the breeder, there will be only enough uranium left to last 25 to 30 years. Commoner asserts that a network of breeders is absolutely inevitable under the directions set in the Carter program. Moreover, it will carry enormous economic and social costs. All of Carter's principal energy alternatives—coal, oil and nuclear—are the most environmentally destructive options available. Finally, Commoner said, current inflation is tied closely to the rising cost of power, and as cheaper fossil fuel reserves are depleted, prices inevitably will spiral.

Nor will nuclear power in the future reverse those trends. "Nuclear breeders will be large, dangerous and expensive enough to be owned only by the government and the very largest corporations," Commoner said. Also, because of their inherent danger and potential to be converted to military use, they will require protection so elaborate and expensive that it will nullify any savings in the price of energy.

Commoner sees ominous threads of the future in the current legislation, which gives the new Secretary of Energy the power to accept jurisdiction over soldiers to protect nuclear power plants. As necessary political concomitants, he also expects an intensification of corporate influence, particularly in the energy area, along with widespread domestic surveillance and detention of dissidents.

Barry Commoner was quite serious and he made a strong impression on his audience. "Suppose you were elected President and wanted to carry out this plan. Could you get away with it?" he concluded. "No. Not unless you sold it as conservation."

Carter found defense in some quarters. On a variation of the "my enemies' enemies are my friends" theory of politics, Iowa state Representative Mary O'Halloran argued that the gathering in Denver should support the President's energy program simply because every organized special interest in the country is against it. Nicholas Carbonne, chairman of the Hartford City Council, ticked off the future and current administration initiatives with potential to affect state and local government—reorganization, welfare, tax reform, housing and jobs—contending that with all those programs still incomplete, there is still hope.

Former Colorado Treasurer Sam Brown, now Director of ACTION, was widely viewed as the principal, but unofficial administration spokesman on hand in Denver. Brown staked out some middle ground by echoing a similar theme. Brown reminded his listeners that there are new people in Washington, especially at middle levels of government whose values were shaped by the same forces that shaped those of his audience. Only "visible pressure from below" will give them the latitude they need to move creatively, Brown said. "I've gone over, and now I'm soliciting you to hold my feet to the fire. The internal forces against change are stronger right now than the external forces for it. So, push on your friends!"

Brown's message did not go down well with some delegates, notably those who hoped he would use the conference to announce specific new initiatives at ACTION—like sending a Peace Corps delegation to Vietnam, for example. Brown said he feels he personally has been given the latitude he needs by the White House. But he still is moving cautiously and his purpose in Denver was merely to leave some bridges intact between the conference he helped establish and the administration he now serves.

It is tempting to define this gathering as simply an outgrowth of the old movement politics. To be sure, that's partly the case and it's a conclusion substantiated by the best known personalities on hand: veterans like Tom Hayden and John Froines of the Chicago Seven, Sam Brown from the Vietnam Moratorium, John Lewis from SNCC and Lee Webb from SDS, all of whom have brought their organizing skills into the political mainstream. Hayden was a US Senate candidate in California last year and gives every evidence of wanting to run again. Froines is director of occupational safety for the state of Vermont. Lewis is heading domestic affairs at ACTION. Webb will resign soon from the faculty of Goddard College to direct the conference full time from Washington.

But the Conference also includes many others, mostly younger, who observed movement politics from the sidelines and were drawn into state and local affairs by more conventional motives. Nevertheless, they represent a new political generation which shares a consciousness shaped by the era of civil rights, Indochina, political assassinations and Watergate. Philosophically, they are traditional liberals in the sense that they believe in an aggressive, intervening public sector. Tactically they would prefer to turn the organizing theories of the 1910s upside down. Then, the idea was to mobilize power in the private sector to force a more progressive use of money in the public sector. Now they recognize that there's more power in the public sector and vastly more money in the private. They are also the first no-growth generation and are grappling at every level of politics with contradictory

COMING: The trials of Marvin Mandel

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demands for jobs, on the one hand, and the environmental priorities that form part of the new creed on the other. They understand very clearly that the budget priorities set in Washington are vital in determining the resources that will be available to local governments. They see the President's decision to defer assumption of a larger federal welfare role and his simultaneous move toward budget balancing and increased defense spending as clear signals that under Carter, like Ford, they inevitably will have less money available for social programs.

Those decisions and similar ones taken by what they termed "Junior Carters" in state capitals around the country were roundly denounced as part of a growing neo-liberal theme of "lowered expectations." Democratic governors like Jerry Brown, Michael Dukakis, Ella Grasso and Hugh Carey were attacked repeatedly as moralists who invoke fiscal integrity as an excuse to trim on social programs, who cater to a tax-beset middle class by making scapegoats of the poor and the welfare system. They view concepts like lowered expectations and devices like government reorganization and zero-based budgeting as nothing more than machinations to buy time and put a little intellectual gloss on the copout. In public policy terms, what it all means is that those without jobs aren't going to get them and those who need decent housing or medical care can figure they're on their own. "In terms of electability, it works," says one of the Conference leaders. "Poor people just don't sell well in America today."

There are still some among this newer generation of activists who subscribe to the old orthodoxy that losing campaigns are just another step in building a political base. More, however, are now prepared to concede that the current mood of the electorate simply has shifted away from the concerns of the left. The issues that have the most potential to mobilize voters and forge coalitions today are those of the other side: anti-abortion, anti-busing, anti-gay rights, anti-welfare, anti-union, anti-government, anti-Washington.

Despite its standing rule of adopting no policy resolutions, the Conference on Alternative State and Local Public Policies began to take on a certain political identity at this meeting. Its main feature is skepticism and that skepticism is directed at Jimmy Carter. There was talk, both in the corridors and from the podium, about the potential to aggravate the President in 1980, and maybe even beat him in the primaries.

Still, most of these folks haven't quite decided whether they're part of the government or part of the opposition. "One of our biggest priorities should be to root out some of the Republican anti-government bureaucrats in key agency positions," Nicholas Carbonne said. "I agree," retorted Barney Frank. "Let's start with Bert Lance and see where we go from there."

Ken Bode

Sunday Times vs. Israel

Torture Tempest

Governments torture, or at least some governments do. It is by now one of those evil banalities of modern life. But are all charges of torture—in Chile and the Soviet Union, in Syria and South Africa, in some African ministate or in an industrial superstate—equally true and equally newsworthy? Or perhaps more to the point, what constitutes proof of a coherent and deliberate program of torture as an instrument of revenge and intimidation?

On June 19, the *Sunday Times* of London published a long and detailed report by its investigative "Insight Team" alleging that the Israeli government systematically tortures Palestinian prisoners in the West Bank and Gaza. Two weeks later, the Israeli embassy in London issued a reply denying the charges and challenging the journalistic methods of the reporters. On July 10, these reporters wrote again, this time in their own defense. In Israel itself, the *Jerusalem Post*, though doubting the credibility of the *Sunday Times*'s indictment, called for some sustained oversight against the temptation of a beleagured people to ignore the use of torture against their enemies; in the Israeli parliament, there is a move for a parliamentary inquiry. But, as the Insight Team conceded in its initial story, it's hard to know whom to believe. "In the nature of torture, only the two parties are present: torturer and victim."

The Insight Team charged that the Israelis have used torture to gain information about terrorist groups, to obtain confessions which then are used to obtain convictions of the terrorists by Israeli courts, and to deter the Arab population from resisting Israeli rule. The story was based on interviews with 49 Arabs who had been detained, some members of their families and two Jewish Communist lawyers who had defended them.

In the Israeli rebuttal, much was made of the fact that the reporters relied only on involved Arab sources and their defense attorneys. At no point in its investigations did the Insight Team confront Israeli judicial or military officials with their evidence and

COMING:

The New Republic
Murder Case

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charges. Having made their choice not to do so, the British journalists set about to compile a strong circumstantial case. It is certainly not one that can be shrugged off cavalierly. The core of their findings is the mutually corroborating accounts of five Palestinians. All of them said they were taken to an interrogation center known as "The Palace of the End" where they were subjected to almost identical forms of abuse. They said they were blindfolded, and once a day sent to "the frigidaire," a cold box with spikes on the floor, constructed so that the prisoner can neither sit down nor stand up. Others testified to different abuses.

The Israeli reply included a general denial of the *Sunday Times*'s charges, and some specific counter-evidence on a few of the cases. Of course it's hard to prove that something did not happen. How could the Israelis adduce concrete proof that one or another Arab was not tortured? However the Israelis did not even attempt to disprove—or even specifically deny—the most vivid charge in the *Sunday Times* article, that concerning the "frigidaire." The Israeli reply says, "The fact . . . that prisoners were at such and such a prison together and both describe it, is indeed evidence, but it is evidence as to facts that are not in question." This is disingenuous; these identical descriptions go to the heart of the Insight Team's accusations.

The thrust of Israel's rebuttal is a defense of the integrity of its judicial system. Most effectively, the Israelis show that the *Sunday Times* disguised to the point of deception the terrorist activities of its complainants. These people have taken many lives, including those of Arabs. In the latest round, the Insight Team conceded some significant omissions.

So what is the verdict in England? The *Sunday Times* reported that it had received 384 letters from readers, of which 262 criticized "a farrago of innuendo" and 90 praised a "courageous exposure." Thirty-two discussed associated matters. Two law lords came down hard against the *Sunday Times*'s article. Lord Justice Salman said, "The Israeli reply destroyed the credibility of the allegations." The former Lord Chancellor, Lord Hailsham, termed the Israeli judiciary "manifestly independent. I am quite certain that they would never have allowed things to pass by that would have aroused criticism or complaint in the most meticulous English court."

In this country, Nicholas von Hoffman discussed the Insight Team report with glee in his syndicated column of July 1. Von Hoffman adopted the same metaphors for the Israelis that became so popular in the Soviet press after the Six Day War, comparing them to Nazis: "If Heinrich Himmler were around to read *The [Sunday] Times*'s report his stony heart might beat with pride . . . . [T]he grotesque irony of using gas as an instrument of torture ought to have been too much . . . for . . . Israeli officials . . . ." But the facts as they have emerged from the Insight Team-Israeli exchange hardly justify von Hoffman's analogy. At worst, the Israelis seem to have tortured only active terrorists. Nothing in the articles indicates the use of torture as a way of controlling the Palestinian population as a whole.

The American press does not seem to know what to do with stories about human rights violations by foreign governments. They are almost always difficult to verify. *The Boston Globe* reprinted excerpts from the *Sunday Times* reports and a few other papers played the controversy big. Others ignored it or buried it in the back pages.

There are reasonable policies that newspapers might follow. Ronald Koven, foreign editor of *The Washington Post*, said last week that his paper would report allegations made by the Red Cross, the Human Rights Commission, and those discovered by the *Post*'s own reporters. The *Post* carried a five-paragraph item the day after the Insight Team's report appeared, and nothing since then. Earlier in the year it ran a series by its own correspondent on conditions in Israeli prisons. These articles reported allegations of torture, but did not give them any credibility. The *Post* may have missed an interesting controversy by doing so little with the *Sunday Times* story, but at least its coverage seems consistent.

The *New York Times*, on the other hand, followed a ragged course. The day after the *Sunday Times* article appeared, our *Times* buried a small box on the Insight Team's report in the nether regions of the paper. When the Israeli reply was issued, the *Times* ran a long bylined article on page three. The story itself, however, was a model of even-handedness: six paragraphs on the accusations, six paragraphs of rebuttal. Then, later in that week, the *Times* ran a Reuters dispatch from Israel by Bernard Edinger. Israeli authorities allowed Edinger to interview Palestinian guerilla prisoners in Gaza, specifically to counter the Insight Team's allegations. Edinger found the prisoners' descriptions of their treatment—being stripped and beaten—not sufficiently grim to qualify in his book as "torture." Why the *Times* chose to print Edinger's story at all, which had been censored by Israeli military authorities, is something of a mystery, particularly in view of the short shrift allowed the original *Sunday Times* dispatch.

Systematic use of torture as a method of political control is obviously repugnant. But one thing is clear from this controversy: any suggestion that Israel engages in this kind of systematic torture of Arabs simply is not true. The question of how a government should treat people who regularly detonate bombs in public places is not susceptible to simple absolutism, such as the outright condemnation of torture. One may have to use extreme measures—call them "torture"—to deal with a terrorist movement whose steady tactic is the taking of human life.

Seth Kaplan

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Stanley Kauffmann on films

High Street
(Tiber)

New York, New York
(United Artists)

Sometimes a fine performance fills me with dismay—because it's in a feeble film and I'm afraid that no one, so to speak, is going to see it. Who saw Peter O'Toole in *Brotherly Love* or Paul Scofield in *Bartleby* or Richard Burton in *Staircase?* Who will see Annie Cordy in *High Street?*

This is a Belgian-French co-production. (It won a prize as a French picture and was the Belgian entry for an Academy Award.) In Brussels lives an American painter, Jewish, earthy, successful. Mort Shuman, who wrote the film's music, plays the part; his music beats his acting. The painter chooses to live in a working-class quarter—lots of Van Gogh types in the cheap bars—and one day he hears a middle-aged mad woman ranting in the streets. She is the widow of a Belgian Jew who was abducted and killed by the Germans during the occupation; in the melee of the arrest, their child was also killed. She is now deranged. She manages to run a fish-stall in a market with the help of a mysterious quiet man who lives with her, but she is subject to fits of insanity triggered, as flashbacks make clear, by a tourist bus that reminds her of the Germans' bus, and so on. Once, remembering how a priest stood by while the horror happened, she climbs to the pulpit of a church during mass and excoriates priest and congregation.

Her mysterious companion, who is nothing like her lover, turns out to be one of the German soldiers who took her husband away. He was virtually a boy at the time and was so shaken that he has come back to share her sufferings. This is part of the theme of shared and unshared guilt in the film. Her Belgian neighbors mostly deride the mad woman; the German ex-soldier joins her. The painter becomes completely involved with her. He changes his painting style because of her and finally, after her death, becomes her vicar to carry on the film's theme: Who Dares to Forget?

The script, by André Ernotte and Elliot Tiber from a novel of theirs, is somewhat pat. Ernotte, who directed, has an unsteady eye: often his camera is too remote or composes incompetently. Most of the actors are inadequate. But the film grips and rives because of Annie Cordy's performance as the woman. She is a Belgian actress and *chanteuse*, born 1928, who has been making occasional films since 1953, though I can't recall seeing her before. We glimpse her first in a crazy outburst, and it rings absolutely, chillingly true. Her material is sometimes rather familiar "crazed" aria, more role than reality. Cordy makes it a woman, intense, authentic, her mind and vision brutally maimed. Each of the many times she has outbursts in the film, she finds a new source of horrible inner truth to keep the woman complete, always to make us look at *her*, not at Cordy acting. It is very fine.

A painful portrait—in a feeble film. What a recommendation! But Cordy finds the human universals in that pain and changes us, along with the painter, into her vicars. Who will see her?

New York, New York is one more of the current avalanche of disappointing US films. They tried to make a tough-sentimental showbiz story with lots of period songs and some new songs, moving in and out of the texture of a musical, using nitty-grittiness as a container for the schmaltz—something like the James Cagney-Doris Day *Love Me or Leave Me* (1955). But the sentiment doesn't take, and what's left isn't tough, it's occasionally repellent but mostly tedious and trite.

The first trouble is the look of the thing. Laszlo Kovacs doesn't know how to photograph his two stars. Robert De Niro, hair plastered down and parted in the middle, is supposed to be attractively menacing: he kept reminding me of Faulkner's Popeye whose face had "that vicious depthless quality of stamped tin." And Liza Minnelli, difficult to like at best, comes out looking like a giant rodent en route to a costume ball.

It's just after World War II. He is a saxophonist, a jazz genius. Like all jazz geniuses of fiction and film, he is a taciturn hero burning with quiet integrity, given to sudden explosions and exits which are explained only retrospectively as the agony of an artist or the way that this strange kid expresses love. (And, as usual, he's the one white player whom black musicians respect.) She is a vocalist with a band. He gets a job with that band and eventually takes it over, but has temperamental troubles. They have married and produced a child. She is zooming to the top, and his ego can't take it. They split. She becomes, let's say, Judy Garland. He has his own success, but nothing like hers. Meeting again after four or five years, they almost try to get together again, but each independently decides not to keep the date.

As an outline, all right. Why shouldn't it be all right? It's worked, with some variation, often enough. But the picture is clobbered from the start. The long first scene is at a victory dance in a hotel ballroom. De Niro is trying to pick up girls and makes his strongest pitch for Minnelli. The scene absolutely depends on charm, but Minnelli has none, ever, and De Niro is not a personality actor, he's an actor. He had a certain poetic appeal in *The Last Tycoon*, but he doesn't have the simple boyish brash charm—Robert Walker, for instance—that was needed here. De Niro just becomes a nuisance in the scene, somehow degraded in taste because he zooms in so ferociously on this pokey-looking girl.

A great deal more in this picture absolutely depends on charm; from both; supplied by neither.

Martin Scorsese, the director, says that some people complain that Minnelli reminds them of her mother, Judy Garland, but there's nothing he can do about that. Two things he could have done in her last song are: not give her, or permit, hyperdramatic Garland gestures; not give her a costume that strongly suggests Garland's costume for the "Get Happy" number of *Summer Stock*.

Since Scorsese clearly doesn't understand that this kind of picture lives or dies by its charm, he presumably doesn't even know that the charm is missing. By now I get the feeling that Scorsese burrows through new scripts looking for the hysterical scenes. They're the

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ones he's comfy with, can score with, can hope to save his film with—De Niro's frenzies in *Mean Streets*, much more of De Niro's frenzies in *Taxi Driver*, Harvey Keitel's frenzy in *Alice Doesn't Live Here Any More*. In *NY, NY* Scorsese leans so heavily on De Niro's outbursts that he plays them for themselves, rather than as prickly components of a character we are in general supposed to like. (If not, nothing.) Scorsese's clumsiness with the central romance is exceeded only by his clumsiness with romantic vignettes: De Niro watching from an El stairway as a sailor and girl dance in the lamplight below; De Niro desolately playing his saxophone under a lamppost at night or in front of a Palisades Park billboard. Because these moments and others like them are so flatly done and baldly inserted, they don't work as apparently Scorsese intended—to convey that these two people are living their lives like characters in a musical. Besides, he gives no equivalent shots to Minnelli, who seems to have interested him much less although she has an equally big part.

The dialogue by Earl Mac Rauch and Mardik Martin is likewise uneasy. It ranges even wider than the visuals do, from a cutesy elopement scene right out of a late 1930s Sonja Henie-Don Ameche gem to a grimy parking-space squabble right out of your unfavorite street. The result is not a blend of light and dark, it's mish and mash.

Charm. This picture, faults and all, might have been pleasant if it had some. De Niro doesn't sell it. Minnelli doesn't have it. Scorsese doesn't comprehend it. So *NY, NY* is NG, NG.

Rule of the Games

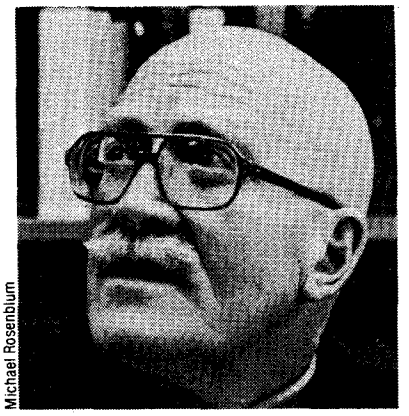
Track at the Middle Distance

by Ronald Berman

Bourgeois sports-writing (*Sports Illustrated*) sees an event in terms of its social context. It dwells on the management and ownership of athletes; on institutions, which it finds more imaginatively compelling than events; and on cheerleaders or fans or the meaning of it all. Every now and then it gets nervous and deals with "issues" like the rights of women or wildlife, reminding itself of how orderly things should be. Radical sports-writing uses the occasion for moral reflections—on violence and racism especially—and it sees *machismo* under every bed, so to speak. In *The Joy of Sports* Michael Novak writes about the aggravated consciousness of enlightened sportswriting, its obsession with exposure, cheating and injustice. The central problem it addresses is "the athlete's development as an individual" and its *telos* is his injured relationship to other people. Novak thinks that this kind of reporting springs from distrust of sports because it is atavistic and implies inequality. Such reporting is full of anxiety about the exploitation of those many tax brackets above us. Neither style is equipped to say much about the event itself and both are uncomfortable dealing with the unreason of body and soul. Both believe that sports is simply ourselves in motion.

Empathy is universally invoked to account for the popularity of athletics; and every time the Adidas emblem shuffles by we are meant to see the identity between greatness and ordinariness, or a stylish approach to middle age, or participation in something good for you that feels good. In its benign way the culture commercializes—not necessarily by imposing unreal charges at Kennedy Stadium or by paying Cosell to tell us how little he knows. The main impulse of commercialization is the drawing together of performer and spectator into a marketplace or community of interest. There is a conscious effort, especially on television, to demythologize sports, to show the athlete as a higher (or sometimes more troubled) form of ourselves.

The explanation of sports doesn't have a great deal to do with its experience. Television mushes on, com-


Michael Rosenblum

Robert G. L. Waite takes a rational look at Hitler's irrationality

Historian Robert Waite reveals the terrifying blend of brilliance and madness that shaped Hitler and his rule. Refuting a current biography, this book "definitely puts the lie to the view that Hitler may not have known about the crimes committed against the Jews."—*Publishers Weekly*. "Immensely revealing."—*James MacGregor Burns*.

THE PSYCHOPATHIC GOD: ADOLF HITLER

Robert G. L. Waite

"Waite does not discount the traditional historical approach in favor of the psychohistorical, but sets out to combine the two and show that each required the other to complement it. The result is a book that is not only continually interesting in itself but may well point the way in which Hitler studies can most profitably develop in their next phase...[of recent biographies] the one most worth reading."—Alan Bullock, *New York Review of Books*

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mentator, color man and shill needling each other, telling us that someone "has speed" or "has desire" or "dominates the game": third-rate politics and kiddie psychology. A light-heavyweight wants to "change the image" of boxing and body-builders talk about themselves the way Keats wrote about a Greek vase. Just about the time everyone is bored to death with higher consciousness it takes a last stand in the pressbox. Luckily, track hasn't had that much attention. Except for the Olympics it has been free from success and its great figures are not articulate. They can't confuse the issue with what is called a lifestyle because training excludes all other ends, and there's no money in it anyhow. Track is about as close to its beginning as anything that old can be.

The essential thing about track is that it is different from everyday life; at least in this culture it doesn't have much to do with games. A game is what people play spontaneously and has almost no structure although it does have rules: kids belly-button high going one-on-one at a backboard they'll never reach, a fat man with memories hitting fly balls at a picnic. Only adults jog. Track is connected to other sports through the sprints which are instrumental. O.J. Simpson ran on a world-class relay and Bob Hayes won the hundred meters in the Olympics. Football uses track as preliminary training—although for the most part it despairs of runners because they have legs of butter and hands of stone.

Track is a relic of Hellenic civilization—baseball is only a century old but has become part of this culture while running is something done only to do something else. Since it involves almost no skills and is confined to a single body-type (lightly muscled, with no particular coordination) it has little to do with aspirations toward strength or heroism and is in fact often a cultural joke. Running in this culture is perceived as running away; and the geriatric nature of jogging is plainly ridiculous. Although Americans see themselves as individualists their sports operate mainly through teams and leagues. Even tennis requires an opponent, a strategy and tactics, a set of rules and a kind of civility. There is nothing else done with the pure disregard for externals that is characteristic of track.

It is one of the few sports in which training is an end in itself. The routine is simple: day after day to prolong exhaustion in order that exhaustion can be incrementally deferred, something, I suppose, like holding your breath underwater. The means in track is the end. There is technically a limit to endurance—the amount of lactic acid buildup in muscular tissues. And there are individual differences in lung capacity or oxygenation that make for differential performance, to say nothing of the advantages (for a distance runner) of lightness and smallness. The variables are probably infinite, as in a golf swing. Stride, the impact of foot, arm strength, which matters much more than is supposed, morale, muscle development, the willingness to endure pain. But these are all contingent causes, except in the sprints, subsidiary to training. Training isn't everything, it's the only thing.

There are a number of things that happen in training, but some of them will always seem irrational. The expected things occur: loss of body-weight, a higher density of muscle, prolonged endurance, even the development of "attitude." But the unexpected things are more interesting. There is, for example, a change in the concept of limits. It is possible to become faster, although from childhood on the expectation is that one can only become longer. A high-school miler can run 400 meters in 52 seconds: after working on distance for another four or five years he should be able to do the 400 in 48 seconds. He should be able to lower his time for 100 yards from a slow 11 seconds to a respectable 10.5. Part of this has to do with improving the body, part with the will—but it is mainly related to the endurance made possible by training. Very few races are run at maximum speed, including what we usually think of as the sprints, so that speed over say 200 meters really means maintaining a maximal effort over a longer period of time. This is a concept exactly opposite to the idea of speed in professional football, where measurement occurs over a distance (40 yards) in which no change can really be hoped for. That is why George Allen sends away 99 out of every 100 hopefuls at the annual open tryouts—their limits at that distance are almost absolute.

The most important and mysterious thing that happens in track sets it apart from nearly every other sport. It has breakthroughs. We tend to understand swimming as the realm of high metabolism, a field of operation for the adolescent body. Tennis defeats strength by technique; Connors knows how to *return* the big serve. Football demonstrates mastery of will over body; the veteran is able to intercept a pass from a faster opponent because of the accumulated cunning of his experience. But in track something else happens, and that is a kind of mutation in bodily ability. It actually happens, and it completely contradicts experience.

Without resort to mystery one should be able to understand that nature does not communicate and is impervious. To rely on evidence like past performance is simply not to understand the nature of running. At a certain stage in training (for the most part after several years) the limits of the body change radically. This was in part borne out by Roger Bannister when he broke four minutes for the mile, but it was widely misinterpreted as a triumph of the imagination. The point is that the barrier of four minutes was not psychological, it was only the point at which training had paused for a generation. The reason that a 3:40 mile is possible has little to do with "barriers" and a great deal to do with the change in physical ability and character made possible by years of development. Track is *of its essence* not predictive. It is absolutely dependent on changes in strength and speed that cannot be prejudged but which appear almost of themselves. This is completely opposed to the notion that a pill or chemical or hormone can, for a single event, result in an Olympic victory. That is unnecessary, because the body, under a regimen of suffering for the right period of years is of itself able to undergo a transformation. And that, in effect, is why times for the mile slowly go down in seconds and by the grinding procedure of race after race against equals. The more training, the more limits themselves change.

There are also personal breakthroughs which are only in part physiological. At some point in the career of great runners they pass through the field of their own expectations. The concept of their former limits disappears and they are virtually reborn physically. The man who knows, after years of experience that he can run a half-mile in two minutes suddenly finds himself (usually within a race rather than in training) running three or even five seconds beyond that. The difference is prodigious: measured in distance it might be half a football field. He is running with the kind of economy and power that he knows would have been flatly impossible and unpredictable before the event. But it does happen, and it is probably the central event in track.

The implication is different from most other sports. Because part of a quarterback's game is strategy he is not expected to throw more than 30 yards

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usually, sometimes 50. He does not develop the capacity to throw 80 yards because it is unnecessary rather than impossible. In track, which goes against the limits of nature, it is possible to change your relationship to the limits of time and space. It is less likely in the sprints, although they have come down in the past decade, by astonishing increments of 10ths of seconds. The ultimate variable for the short distance is the development of the human body—and probably the restrictions of anatomy. There is finally a limit of bodily friction and of the capacity of tendons to hold muscle and bone. In the longer distances we are not even midway towards the future. A quarter-miler today can match the combined efforts of any four of the finalists in the 100 meters of the first modern Olympics. He could beat them all at their distance while each ran a leg one-quarter the length of his distance.

Because track is so much directed against the self it would seem to proceed, like other relics of classical civilization, from a sense of particular values. It implies endurance, the capacity for pain, and the belief in transcendence or mutation. If Woody Hayes ever thought about it he would drop football like a hot potato; track is evidently the right training for right thinking. But I don't think it can easily be harnessed either for capitalism or morality. Track is fundamentally ironic, which is one of the reasons that it fails to interest most people in the modern world. It resists technique (except in field events, which are different) and is more or less fixated on the primitive relationship of the body to the limits of nature. It is deeply private. There is almost no relationship at all between those who try out for it and those who do well at it. The great track man really feels contempt for most of the world precisely because what he does is unworldly. So that we have a sport that does not exemplify anything typically American, that excludes those who cannot excel, and that is based on principles developed by another kind of civilization. It is so much more individualistic than the spirit of free enterprise that Americans are, understandably, ambivalent towards it. Runners are always lonely.

Ronald Berman, former chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities, and former half-mile champion of New York City, occasionally suffers from tendonitis.

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White Flannels, Grass Courts

by Jeffrey Hart

This is going to be a Valentine card to an old girl, the game of tennis as I knew it most intensely, a declaration of love for an activity to which I totally committed myself during my most impressionable years, and which sometimes, at some moments still, gives me as much pleasure as almost anything else.

All sports have a metaphorical quality. Think of Joe Louis and poor Schmeling. For me, tennis certainly had a metaphorical quality.

ii.

When I first hit a tennis ball, it must have been in 1944, against the cement hand-ball wall of a public school in Queens, I would not have known what the word "metaphor" meant. Nevertheless I knew, I was made vividly aware by my peers, that tennis was in fact . . . *hated.*

Tennis, is those pre-affluent years, was considered elitist, possibly decadent. Slugging the ball against that humble concrete wall, I heard from my peers flat declarations that I was undoubtedly a snob and probably a sexual deviant. Later, in high school, carrying my tennis rackets through the New York subways, I had to endure the queer charge daily.

It is possible that the snob charge was correct. Inside my puny frame I was an intense romantic. I knew, correctly, that in the 1940s tennis was an elite sport. I

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freely confess that as a 12 year old this meant a great deal to me. I read eagerly about the great matches during the 1920s and 1930s at Wimbledon, Cannes, Nice. I had not yet stepped onto an actual tennis court, I was merely hitting a ball against a cement wall in the school yard, but my heart belonged to grass courts, striped awning, the clear blue Riviera skies—under which, I knew, people like the Doherty brothers had played, and Tilden, and R. N. Williams. "Hart Wins at Monte Carlo." The notion was breathtaking.

iii.

In retrospect, the period in which I played, or tried to play, serious tennis represents the sunset of the elite period of the game. I now know, as I did not know then as a child player, that a lot about the game was rotten, hypocritical and corrupt. Had I been an important adult player in 1945, knowing what I know now about big time sports, I certainly would have been a rebel against the tennis establishment.

But what my childish eyes saw was also true, and even now I cannot judge that it was less important. For a few years after World War II, the Eastern grass-court circuit was a thing of great elegance and beauty. Between Wimbledon early in the summer, and Forest Hills around Labor Day, wonderful tournaments were held at places like Seabright, New Jersey; Southampton, Long Island; and Newport, Rhode Island.

iv.

Somewhat paradoxically, in view of my attitude toward this perceived elegance, my own attitude toward competition was relentlessly Calvinistic. Beneath my off-white, monogrammed polo shirts and cable-stitch sweaters there beat the fierce heart of a Cromwellian. As a tournament player I correctly regarded an unforced error or any other mistake as a moral lapse: perhaps my attention had flagged, perhaps I had reached for the ball instead of taking an extra half step. There is no reason short of an atomic attack why a technically competent and attentive player should ever make an unforced error. Every set, game, stroke thus became a moral test. Bunyan's Pilgrim? Bah: squishy soft. The experience of ease in athletics comes through total mastery of technique; as it does in music or anything else.

Every morning during the tournament season I would appear at the Club early, around 8:30. I would place tennis ball cartons in the four corners of the service courts, and then hit 50 serves into each of them. You can develop a pretty decent serve that way, even if you are not physically powerful.

v.

From those adolescent days in the immediate aftermath of the war, some absolutely exquisite matches remain indelible in my mind. Two of them, as it happens, involved William F. Talbert, one of the finest stylists in the history of the game.

The first, it must have been in the summer of 1947, was the grass-court final at Seabright, New Jersey, Talbert against Frank Parker.

Parker was a remarkable player, a made player, scientific, a sort of American Lacoste. He was relentlessly steady and accurate, but he was not, contrary to lay opinion, defensive. I have never understood how a backhand hit with slight underspin would be hit as hard as Parker hit his and still stay in the court. Talbert was the rapier, a stylist and an abrupt shot-maker. For two hours they duelled. Talbert did not have the power to overwhelm Parker. He therefore had to play "against the percentage," bring off shots that were very risky. Talbert hung in against Parker, trusted to brilliance, and won esthetically but lost the Seabright Bowl.

The second exquisite match, later that season, took place at Southampton. Pancho Gonzales, age 18, had come East from Los Angeles, knife scar, big serve and all, and he had been raising hell on the court with the established players. Spectacularly, he had made it to the Southampton finals, and I drove out there with my cronies for the match.

When we got there, I immediately saw why Gonzales was in the finals. It had rained all week, and the grass was soggy. Gonzales had a heavy serve, like a Dempsey punch. You could see the water spin off the ball after it left the grass, and Gonzales's serve must have weighed 50 pounds on Talbert's racket. I sat on the porch of the Meadow Club and watched Talbert play supremely great tennis. He held his own serve, he waited, he waited, and he won.

vi.

My finest hour in tennis. I was sitting on the porch of the Forest Hills Club drinking a Coke and Frank Parker walked up. "Want to hit some?" he asked. I nearly fell out of my chair. "I'm not happy with my backhand," Parker went on. A two time national champion, Parker had, probably, the best backhand in the world. Okay, I said, and we went out onto one of the members' courts near the clubhouse.

Parker wanted to fine-tune his backhand. We began hitting them cross-court. At the outset, Parker's shots were landing perhaps two feet from the baseline. Gradually, inch by inch, they got deeper. We would hit dozens over the net before an error, usually by me. In due course, Parker's backhand was hitting two or three inches from the baseline with relentless regularity. Despite this, I managed to return most of them hard and deep. Parker seemed to get curious. "Nice backhand," he said. "Where did you learn that?" "From Bill Talbert," I said, "in a junior clinic." Talbert had stressed getting your weight on the right foot at the moment of impact.

"Let's play a set," Parker said. By that time a fair-sized crowd was watching.

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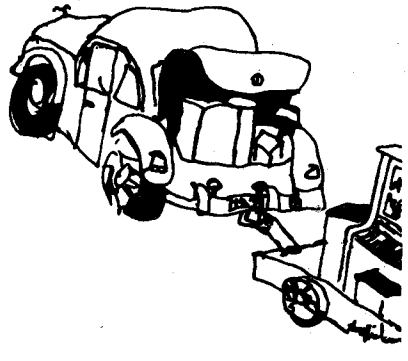

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Play a set we did, and Parker let me win two games. A couple of days later, he carried Jack Kramer to five sets in the Stadium.

vii.

Tennis. For me it is like Proust with his cookie. Everything comes flowing back, everything.

I must have been a very young child at the time, but I remember a neighborhood squabble over the great Davis Cup match between Don Budge and the German, Baron Von Cramm. Budge came from behind in the fifth and deciding set to win for the United States. My parents were for Budge, but, astonishingly to my childish mind, all of our, as I now understand, middle class neighbors were rooting for Von Cramm. I think I understood this at the time as pure snobbery. When Don Budge broke Von Cramm's service for the second time in the fifth set, the news reaching me via radio in our back yard, I took off my roller skates and threw them into the air. My feelings have always been direct and uncomplicated.

Later on, as a mature player, I saw a lot of Budge, but one episode sticks in my mind. It was well-known that he used one of the heaviest rackets in the history of the game, and that his arm was about as muscular as most people's thigh. I stopped off in the pro shop at Forest Hills, and there was Budge putting lead strips on the head of his huge club. "What are you doing?, Don" I asked. "It puts more punch in my volley," he said. I imagine it did.

viii.

I must record here one of the most astonishing phenomena in the history of the game. It is not clear to me why it is not better known. The phenomenon is Tom Brown, Jr.

I will never forget this figure.

The year was 1946, just after the war, and what all of us junior players were wondering was whether anyone could beat two-time national champion Frank Parker. A lot of players were coming back from the war, Kramer, Schroeder, Don McNeill—but then, all of a sudden, there was Tom Brown, Jr., of San Francisco, more or less unknown. Earlier that year, unseeded, he had created a stir at Wimbledon, but his greatest week came at the National Championships in Forest Hills.

Tom Brown, Jr. was a rangy, loping player with short curly black hair and muscles like hawsers. During the war he had been a fighting soldier, a mortar Sergeant, not a tennis playing soldier like most of the others. That week, Brown experienced a tremendous release of energy. His strokes on both sides hit up the back of the ball with terrific force, highly unorthodox and difficult to control, but control began to set in. The sportswriters were saying that Brown was hitting the ball as hard off the ground as Ellsworth Vines had hit his forehand—but, of course, Brown was doing it with his backhand too. I do not think I have ever seen a more total expense of being.

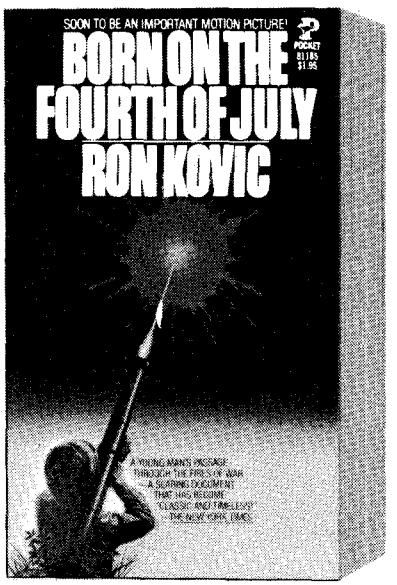
In the quarter finals Brown did the impossible. He beat Frank Parker from the baseline, of all things, simply hitting the ball away, time after time, in the fading dusk. It was theoretically possible to beat Parket by going to net. It was theoretically impossible to do so from backcourt. That day, Tom Brown hit more low-percentage winners than I have ever seen in a match.

Against Gardner Mulloy, in the semis, Brown was, if anything, better. Before the match, back in the clubhouse, Mulloy was naturally puzzled about how he should deal with this problem. "Go to net," other players told him. "Cut it off. Don't hit with him." It may have been good advice. Mulloy, repeatedly national doubles champion, was a great net player. But on that Saturday afternoon in the Stadium, Tom Brown was hitting the ball so hard off the ground that it could not be volleyed. Mulloy would be there to meet it, but the racket would twist in his hand. A couple of times Brown's shots hit various parts of Mulloy's body. Three quick sets, and Brown was into the finals on Sunday, against Kramer.

In a jammed Stadium, under a boiling Labor Day sun, Kramer, the only time I have ever seen him do so, played very cautiously. He had obviously decided to put everything into holding his own tremendous serve, weather the Brown storm, and hope that something might turn up. It worked. After a very long and furious first set, Kramer broke Brown and went on to his first championship. (Incidentally, in 1968 I saw Brown, now a weekend player, almost beat Bob Lutz, an international class player half his age, in a tournament in Sacramento.)

Looking back, I think that the 1946 Tom Brown phenomenon was a symbolic moment in the history of the sport. Brown, soldier and lawyer, may have been the Last Great Amateur. At any rate, tennis began to change rapidly,

Ron Kovic dreamed of being an American hero.



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become a very different metaphor.

ix.

As might well be imagined, I am ambivalent about tennis as it has recently developed.

There are many more first-rate players than there used to be, many of them making excellent livings as players. I approve of that, and I very much enjoy watching them. I may be in love with Chris Evert.

We do not now necessarily have, however, greater players than in the defunct era. In my judgment, Connors definitely would not have beaten Kramer or Budge, let alone Tilden.

And, of course, the ethos is gone. The sense of style. Caesar's Palace in Los Vegas is not Seabright, and the Boston Lobsters do not remind me of Southampton. Tennis is now mass entertainment. "Now that thing is gone," Scott Fitzgerald wrote in a famous story, "That thing will come no more."

Jeffrey Hart

Jeffrey Hart, when not playing tennis, is a syndicated columnist and professor of English at Dartmouth.

Baseball in the Mind

by Richard Rabinowitz

Sometimes it seems, in these days of contract squabbles and franchise shifts, that baseball is a game best played in the mind, in what Roger Angell once called "the interior stadium." At the very least, it is a game peculiarly suited for recollection. Across our minds, on winter nights and summer mornings, we recapture the images of marvelous moments: of Willie Mays flying back to haul in Vic Wertz's smash in the '54 Series, of Carlton Fisk popping one out to win a game 21 years later, and so on. My own cherished image is of Sandy Amoros racing to the leftfield line to catch the slicing liner hit by Yogi Berra at Yankee Stadium in 1955, then wheeling to catch Gil McDougald off first base, and thereby to preserve Johnny Podres's shutout and the first World Championship for my beloved Bums.

Baseball writers have always delighted in recording these memorable motions, and no other sport is so easily retained in the mind. That is the secret of baseball. Esthetically it's the simplest of games, some have said, because all its action is comprised in the convergence of two lines, all its successes in getting to the point of convergence first, all its failures in not getting there in time. Berra's swing meets Podres's pitch over the plate and flies toward left; Amoros runs and runs to his right so that he can catch the screamer in his mitt before it hits the ground; his throw to Reese and from him to Hodges at first base arrives before McDougald can dive back. All the rest we know of that moment—that Berra seldom hit to left, that Amoros was among the weaker outfielders in either league, that the runs saved would have tied the game—can be ignored for the moment as we contemplate the sequential plane geometries of the diamond game. The whole beauty of baseball is tied up in these fortuitous meetings of bat and ball, ball and glove, foot and base.

The motions are clearly recorded for posterity. Every "at bat" is a chance to hit or miss, every ball hit at a fielder is a chance to catch it or miss. These simple verdicts, handed down a thousand times a game, express also the fundamental individualism of baseball; within given plays each player stands revealed: the only question, as Casey Stengel used to say, is "can he execute?" Thus, baseball statistics, usually phrased as "percentages" of hits or bases or errors against the total chances, are really accurate measures of performance. Football and basketball records, by contrast, reveal the *degree* of success in any given endeavor, and they have built-in problems in separating the contribution of one player (say the running back who gains 100 yards) from another (the linemen who block for him). Baseball rules prohibit players from hitting, catching or throwing a ball together; the only teamwork is one of getting the sequence of motions lined up properly (as in the double play). Baseball records hence speak to a man's reliability. Or rather, not reliability exactly, but the likelihood of cashing in on a speculation. Even the best hitters, after all, connect safely on only one of three trips to the plate. To the manager in the dugout, and to the fans in the stands, though, such a "consistent" hitter is a far better investment for one's hopes than the man on the bench who hits only .250, or once safely every four times.

Baseball records go back almost as far as baseball itself, and typify the way the sport is rooted in the emerging 19th century romance with enumeration and calculation. (In the sandlots where I first played, the ability to do long division was an important qualification for being the team captain.) Baseball is probably the only sport, possibly the only competitive activity, which can be almost perfectly reconstructed as a board game. With three dice, a pencil and plenty of paper, an entire season of runs batted in, balks, rained-out games, injuries and other marvels, can be reconstituted in exactly the same proportions as they occur in the annual pennant campaigns. You can make up your own varieties of this enterprise, or purchase one advertised in *Baseball Digest* and other newsletters for dopesters. Dice baseball, say Woodward and Bernstein, was David Eisenhower's Falstaff when his father-in-law's reign was threatened in 1974. Each commercial version of dice baseball is sold by testimonials of its remarkable ability to repeat past experience perfectly. Unlike the boxed "war games," which also sell prodigiously, the idea here is not to chance the reversal of the outcome of historic struggles like Stalingrad or Poitiers. Dice baseball, in essence, is only a sophisticated version of the child's experimental flipping of a coin a hundred times to see whether heads or tails comes up most often.

Why grown people should play these games requires some explanation, and I think the explanation tells us something about baseball itself. The action of a baseball game takes place only when the pitcher throws, or more especially, when the batter connects with the pitch. After that, while the ball is "in play," all the fielders and all the men on base enact a highly stylized performance of their predetermined roles. The roles are built into the rules of the game—fielding a particular position, running the bases

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safely. The ball triggers the loyalty of all the players to the ultimate authority, the rules of baseball. In a way, every pitch in a baseball game, like every toss of the dice in its board game version, is a willingness to put oneself on the line, individually, in the process of playing out some predetermined yet unrevealed history.

What we seek in this encounter with determinism is to demonstrate the orderliness of the whole system (called "the law of averages"), on the one hand, and the possibility of individual excellence (making one's own record), on the other. Though it is too much to say that baseball is a Calvinist's game, still it's hard to imagine such a sport emerging from a society less imbued with the Calvinist image of the sinner meeting his Maker all alone.

But the authority in baseball is never arbitrary, as the dice baseball Creator discovers in Robert Coover's splendid novel, *The Universal Baseball Association, Inc.: J. Henry Waugh, Prop.* In fact, baseball is a cultural invention of the period in American history when divine authority was being wrested from the Calvinist Godhead and enthroned in the social norms of a capitalist society which valued individualism, regularity and modest speculation above all else. So though each player seems to play out his destined role in game after game and season after season, his aim is not to glorify the game but to make his own fortune. Thus it is that baseball, unlike religion, is a contest in which one team's victory is contingent upon the other's defeat. To the team at bat, the little white ball, hit safely and dancing with a wild joy to the outfield wall, is the "holy spirit" which allows its souls to reach home; to the team in the field, the ball is at the same time a kind of unleashed "sin" which must be tamed, used to tag runners out, and then retrieved to the pitcher. Still, these different perceptions do not diminish the shared respect of both teams for the rules. So well does this principle operate that the philosopher George Herbert Mead, among others, turned to baseball as an ideal metaphor for the way individual personality arises out of social interactions.

That baseball is in decline these days says much about the way Americans are abandoning these habits of mind. Football, clearly on the upswing, is far more suited to an organizational society; it is a game of almost ceaseless technical innovation and specialization. In football, strategic planning has expanded so much that the snap of the ball, rather than yielding conventional motions like those of baseball, reveals newly projected "x's" and "o's" from the coach's game plan. The plays are thus "sent in" from the sidelines, even in one case from the White House via the Redskins' coach in the Super Bowl. Put 18 men on a baseball diamond, and the eternal rhythms of the old game would begin to throb of themselves. Twenty-two football players would, in a similar instance, consort only to pray for outside guidance. In baseball the major strategic decisions are fairly minor risks like a hit-and-run play or a sacrifice bunt, or they are the substitution of specialists for specific situations, usually near the end of the game. That was appropriate for the commercial society in which baseball began, but it is less so for the planned universe we now inhabit, in which we have become suspicious of all scorekeepers, scornful of all natural limits, and less willing to measure our grace or gracelessness in the summer sunshine.

Richard Rabinowitz is a historian who stays in Belmont, Massachusetts when he is not living in Fenway Park.

The Loveliness of the Long Distance Runner

by Erich Segal

The Greeks would not have liked me. I am not an athlete. For though I run, I do not run to win. And worst of all, I go too far. In the Hellenic view of life, sport and culture were synonymous, but nonetheless they had no admiration for the distance man. He did not fire them to song. In fact, of all the odes of Pindar, only one is dedicated to a winner in the *dolichos*, their longest race (about three miles). The sprinters and the horses got the lyrics.

What is more, they laughed at us. The distance runner was the butt of countless jokes. Take for instance the old chesnut—it was ancient even then—about the runner who was seventh in a field of six (*Palatine Anthology* XI. 82). There was no honor whatsoever in the marathon, primarily because they never had one. This 26 mile rite is strictly modern (its Jerusalem, of course, is Boston). Old Pheidippides, the quasi-legendary chap who footed it from Marathon to Athens with the news of victory against the Persians was no "athlete" to the Greeks. He had the social stature of a telegram. He was no better than the other members of his lowly class, *hemerodromoi* (literally, "all-day-runners"), messengers who merely brought the news. Paperboys before the age of paper.

This may seem paradoxical to some. Why should the grunting wrestler merit high esteem, while distance runners languish in the shadows of renown? Alas, the answer is skin deep. Greed culture was *so* physical, they worshipped muscles over everything. Sprinters made good statues; scrawny distance men could only model for a toothpick. Greeks revered the outer man. The "sovereign poet" Homer didn't even have a word for soul.

But time jogs on. And values change. Today, especially the age in which we live, it is the perseverent runner who commands respect. Absolutely everybody does it. Several million years from now when archeologists unearth our footprints, they will find the fossilized impressions of a trackshoe. *Ad astra per Adidas.* Current magazines abound in paeans to pedestrians. To an athlete trying . . . middle-aged."

And, of course, the doctors hallelujah all the theraputic—

Never mind the doctors!

We should ignore their Hippocratical remarks. They tell us running is the best way not to die (too soon). And hence our parks now teem with converts chasing immorality.

No. Running isn't merely prophylaxis any more than music is an aural

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tranquilizer, though it also soothes the savage breast. Running is to therapy what Mozart is to Muzak. We do not run to live. We live to run.

Let me expatiate.

Man in a state of nature is a runner. Look at children: they are always running. Their first halting steps are but a transient stage towards culmination in a sprint. We smile to watch them scamper. But if we ever asked outselves precisely why, we would discover that our smile betrays a deep-felt envy. For a child is free. We grownups must be "civilized." Oh Freud, the most pernicious of our Discontents, (*das schlechteste Unbehagen*, Sig) is that society has arbitrarily set down that adults *walk*, not run. What tyrant forged this brutal legislation, tearing the Achilles tendon of the Id?

A child who runs along Fifth Avenue is charming. But an adult sprinting in his streetclothes is a lunatic, a lover, or a thief.

The Bible says King David "danced and leaped" before the Ark. I always thought these lines meant that he was joyous. But a recent medical interpretation argues he was doing calesthenics, with longevity in view.

Horace in his *Ars Poetica* dichotomized the world into the *dulce* and the *utile*. And strict dogmatic Roman that he was, he recognized no art in anything that had no usefulness. The modern "classicists" who have inherited this puritan mentality are those prosaic souls who only harp upon the *utile* of running.

Well, yes. A grain of truth. It is a scientific fact that running is, by chance, salubrious as well. But so is sex. Yet has a man in passion ever cried, "I only do it for my health"? Nay, love transcends the logical. *Le coeur a ses raisons* . . . .

It has been said that great ideas afflate themselves to people as they run. Perhaps. Once upon a 20 miler, I was struck (or stricken) with the following profundity: is it mere linguistic hazard that the English word for soul is voiced exactly like the word betokening the bottom of a trackshoe? And is it but coincidence that "sole" is also like the "sole" in solitary? Surely there is meaning in all this. For when a runner hears the sound of *sōl*, it klangs in him a triad of associations which, religiously appropriate, become a unity. (Run 20 miles and see.)

The distance runner finds his soul in solitude. He is not, *pace* Alan Sillitoe, a lonely man, for every time one sole alights upon the earth, the other is aloft. He is at one with nature. And he flies. (The winged foot is everywhere in iconology.)

We know that, fellow runners, don't we? When we run, we *fly*. It is sublimity that few except the mystic poets can express. And it is sensual. Read Roger Bannister (*The First Four Minutes*). Not the part about his fainting when he breaks the record, but where he describes the ecstasy of running through the woods. He candidly admits there is a touch of eros in it. Who could gainsay Bannister? The man's a doctor too.

We know that running is both metaphysical and metaphorical. And we recall what Marvell tells his mistress:

. . . though we cannot make our sun
Stand still, yet we can make him run.

Or, as the philosopher remarked just after running 20 miles: *la course a ses raisons*.

Erich Segal has completed 40 full-length marathons, once finishing first (Washington, DC, March 17, 1963). His most recent full-length novel, *Oliver's Story*, is currently running second on the best sellers list.

The Horse Right Here

by James Morgan

After the Kentucky Derby and after the Preakness I was treated to close-ups of Karen and Mickey Taylor, the stewardess and lumberman, revelling in victory, smug, self-satisfied expressions pasted on their faces, much in the style of Chris Evert. And, later in the newspapers, I would read how "Slew" could have won by more lengths "if he had wanted." The nation's sporting press, lemmings to a man—well, there are a few exceptions—bought the whole act. Seattle Slew was the greatest. Seattle Slew was perfection—better than Secretariat. Seattle Slew was God and a Christian and Pegasus all wrapped up into one. I went to New York to Seattle Slew run in the Belmont for myself.

What I saw was not what I had read. I saw a very ordinary looking colt with a dull coat—Run Dusty Run was by far the best turned out colt that day—allowed to loaf along on the lead for a mile and then finish with a fine sprint in the last half mile. He was not a great race horse. He had fine balance, and clean action, but he was hardly inspiring, no Dr. Fager, no Damascus, no Cougar II. His victories had been for the most part empty. As Eddie Arcaro had said, Seattle Slew was running against a miserable group of horses. Of course the lemmings—I mean the sporting press—rushed to their typewriters to see who would be the first to berate Arcaro. I mean what did Arcaro know about horses. They were the sporting press—racing writers—they got their press blurbs handed out to them daily by the racetracks so that they would not be forced to think as they wrote their daily story. On July 3, 1977, in Inglewood, California, at Hollywood Park, in the Swaps Stakes, Seattle Slew lost. Badly. He was beaten by 16 lengths and by three different horses. Don't blame the horse. He did the best he could.

Handicapping books written by racing writers to educate the public about the art of picking winners always talk about factors. The speed factor. The weight factor. The Jockey factor. I have another factor for them. The greed factor. After Seattle Slew had won the Triple Crown, the owners announced that they were going to give their beloved animal a long rest—a well deserved rest—until the fall classics. The long rest lasted a week. The Taylors loved Seattle Slew so much that when Hollywood Park announced that they would add $100,000 to the purse if Seattle Slew would only come out and play—well—the Taylors started calling travel agents. After all, Seattle Slew was only a product, the tool in a very clever con job.

An extremely enterprising reporter for Newsday tracked down the greasy fingered Guliks responsible for the

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public 'loving' Seattle Slew. A money merchant named Ed Gearns who is in charge of 'merchandising' Seattle Slew referred to the race horse as a 'multi-million dollar marketing commodity.'" This same Ed Gearns, who clearly does not know a horse from a horseshoe, revealed himself to be another part of a horse entirely when he went on to say in the most outrageous sort of press flackery that the fact that Seattle Slew had never been beaten (that was last week) made him "different from any other horse that ever stepped on a race track." Mr. Gearns let me introduce you to Colin and Ribot, among others. I just heard them rattling in their graves.

Racing purists rate Colin Sysonby, Man 'o War, and Citation as the greatest American race horses of this century. The jury is still somewhat out on Secretariat. Colin won all of his 15 races, including the Belmont Stakes, and retired because of a racing injury. And the great European horse Ribot—he raced in 1954 and 1955 and 1956 and retired undefeated after winning all of his 16 races including the Arc de Triomphe twice. Of course I can see Mr. Gearn's point. If the Taylors are going to hire him and the public is going to believe him, well then, he might as well say anything he can get away with. There are all these Seattle Slew t-shirts and Seattle Slew pictures—signed by Karen Taylor—to sell. Personally I want a Seattle Slew mug. At least Ed Gearns was sharp enough to realize that—this was before the little jaunt to California—that Seattle Slew was a multi-million dollar commodity only "as long as he's undefeated." But my favorite quote in the *Newsday* story came from one Michael Lissauer, "The great thing is, we get so much free advertising from the Taylors' plugging it (pictures) on TV shows."

Perhaps I have spent too much time in Europe. There exists there—especially in England and Ireland and France—a great reverence for a race horse. There is a history and a tradition to racing that is for the most part lacking in the United States. At Longchamp, the greatest of the French race tracks, lying in the Bois de Boulogne on the outskirts of Paris, the turfistes talk about race horses the way art critics talk about paintings. This horse is too long in the neck and that one has too short a cannon bone; this horse has a very good looking shoulder and that one has a fine looking head. When the better horses run, many in the crowd can recognize their favorites from a half-mile away the way one might recognize a friend.

A few days before the Arc de Triomphe race in 1973 I went to the Hospital for Jockeys at Maisons-Lafitte to visit George F.T.X. Ryall. He is better known as Audax Minor, the racing writer for *The New Yorker*, and by now he is very close to being 100 years old. Mr. Ryall had broken a bone in his foot, which is not hard to do when one is over 90, and he was receiving a glorious list of visitors. One of them, a young man in his 60s, Baron Hennessey, of the cognac family, offered me a ride back to Paris which I accepted. Absentmindedly I asked the Baron during the ride back if there were any owners of race horses in France who were making a living at it. "I certainly hope not!" he snorted.

It is a little hard for me to imagine Baron Guy de Rothschild—his Crystal Palace won the French Derby this year—plugging Crystal Palace t-shirts on French television shows, or, the Queen of England—her Dunfermline won the Epsom Oaks in May—sneaking in a sales pitch on the BBC for signed pictures of her filly. Race horses are not boxes of soap powder. They are works of art. Every once in a great while a race horse comes along that is a masterpiece. They are animals of great intelligence (for a horse) and speed and courage. Seattle Slew, although he is not a great horse, is a fine horse, a very, very, good horse, and it gives me extreme gastric pain to see him hawked about America like ball park mustard, his greedy owners grabbing at every dollar they see.

Of course they were terribly short sighted. By running a horse tired by the Triple Crown races, by running a horse

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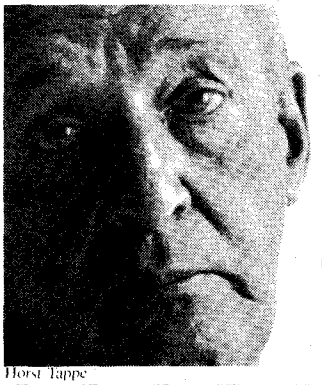
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that was a speed horse against other speed horses (California is full of speed—front running—horses), by giving their horse too fast a workout (6 furlongs in 1102/5) too close to the race, they helped insure Seattle Slew's defeat. And this was all to grab an extra $100,000. They effectively cut the stud value of their horse from a possible high of $15 million to well below $10 million. For the Taylors', for the co-owners the Hills, for the trainer Billy Turner, it was a very sad July the Fourth. They treated a work of art like a piece of plastic and they ended up with damaged goods.

The prospects for the future are not encouraging. In the fall Seattle Slew can either run in New York against the tried and true Forego and the California Crystal Water due to be shipped East, or Seattle Slew can ship to France and try to win the one mile and a half Arc de Triomphe. France would be a disaster. Seattle Slew is not really a mile and a quarter horse, and he is certainly not a mile and a half horse—in the Belmont, his only mile and a half race, he beat five fat men running around the block. The New York races are at a mile and an eighth and farther, and Forego is certainly and Crystal Water perhaps better horses over those distances. The prospects are of another defeat. But, whatever happens this fall, one thing is certain; Seattle Slew will continue to demonstrate more class than his owners.

James Morgan, a free lance writer, has profitably followed horses in Venezuela, France, England, Ireland and America.

No Image for Soccer

by Michael G. Cooke

Pressed, one could hope to make the calculus of a game like hocky intelligible to a novice by employing something as common as the human hand. Just for a moment imagine the hand extended, palm up, and *voilà* the deployment of a hockey team on attack. The little finger and thumb are on the "points," supporting the offense and poised to resume the defensive; the middle finger unsurprisingly comes out as the center; ring and index fingers reach out as the wings. The heel of the hand then would constitute the goal, to which the adventuring raiders rapidly pull back in a tight fist to fend off the onset of an identically situated opponent. Beyond this basic structure of play, one notes the headlong rapidity of the skates within what is already a mildly claustrophobic arena, and the puck, alternately a black blaze, and a rat-like demon of ricochet and frustration.

There appears no handy image for soccer, though it takes up the same challenges as hockey. The mere fact that the game has 10, rather than five unrestrictedly mobile players makes it incalculably more complex. Moreover, soccer has no catchy jargon for the uninitiate. What, to begin with, should we call its basic skill? Pedal dexterity? To say a player 'heads the ball' is unexpressive at best, but to exclaim that he 'aims the ball perfectly with his head' is ludicrous, and dismal. If soccer tends to reduce the American sportscaster to new depths of banality, it downright refuses to be reduced to the frame of a television screen. The camera follows the ball, and loses the players; or it follows a player (arbitrarily, Pelé), and loses the field. It does not know where to look, what to look for.

And yet soccer is an eminently visible game. Its pace is high, but human, and it curtails the flashy, distracting influence of raw force and accident. Like hockey it presents rapid articulation and change, individual finesse, personal discipline and mutual sensitivity (indeed, the coherence of the fingers on *two* hands). And soccer presents all this in a more spacious, a more gracious way than hockey. A symbol of the game could be found in the fact that the field is more open to the spectator than a rink. Soccer does not demand initiation into the mysteries of skating, does not exaggerate and burden the human body with armature, does not presuppose, by frequent interruption and substitution, that it proceeds beyond the scale of human stamina.

Accessible, *simpático* on the surface, soccer yet gives the typical American trouble enough, and deep. Mothers say they love it because it is economical and free of violence; rather than soccer, they love being able to ignore it since their offspring are safe in it (little do they know its dangers). Fathers say they love it, call it "a great sport." But look into their eyes and you find defiance or bafflement. This has become the thing to say about what remains, even in all-embracing California, an alien pastime. The response to soccer has changed from total ignorance to pure cliche without passing through acquaintance and appreciation.

This anomaly will not soon correct itself. The massive promotion of soccer in North America will not answer here; it is the cause of the anomaly. The television camera, a simple-minded Polyphemus, is at a loss to follow the game, let alone lead others to it. And the television commercial, with its voracious impudence, can find no purchase to begin chewing up the game. What can one make of the director who prays that when the ball goes out of bounds it will roll under the stands, so he can slip in a 15-second spot? Implicitly the spot becomes paramount, and the game gets sacrificed for a pot of message.

Apart from a time out, the camera should be looking for patterns. Not set patterns—soccer is no sewing bee—but spontaneous, evolutionary ones. Soccer is a territorial game, like American football, but it seeks, instead of a position on the ground, the composition of a system of options over the ground. It keeps the ball not by clutching and barreling along, but by giving it off in a woven distribution among players who blindingly interchange the responsibilities of ball control, positioning, decoying opponents, passing and shooting. It is a witty game, by indirections finding directions out.

Perhaps the image for soccer would be that of a visible kaleidoscope, with a goal in view. But can this image be Americanized? It is crucial to remember two factors. To begin with, soccer is being pushed by people who have fallen in love with it sight unseen (a unique phenomenon); they know it as box-office statistics, not as an art. Opportunists, they are looking for profitable novelty,

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and could as readily have turned to racing blind mules with monkeys up. In the second place, soccer is being pushed here at a time when financial interests in traditional soccer countries have changed and dampened the game. On the principle that winning makes money and the next best thing to winning is not losing, owners and coaches have settled for a style of play that tries to win as safely as possible. This means playing *not to lose*, in a manner precise, sturdy, averse to risk, frequently busy without being purposive, careful about being offensive and a bit curmudgeonly when danger arises—in short, the classic profile of an inherited secretary, and just as fetching. This is typified by the fact that in the recent English Cup Final the two best teams in the country played to a scoreless draw, with neither achieving so much as a single shot on goal.

The improbable combination of opportunism in outlook and conservatism, almost mechanization in approach may seem unappetizing, but let us not jump to harsh judgments. Might such a combination not contain a special key to American hearts? Anyone who wishes to avoid being stranded on the barren atoll of nostalgia had better recognize which way the tide is rolling. We are on the verge of converting North America to soccer, or perhaps converting soccer to North America.

To care mightly about keeping the form of anything has come to seem, in American eyes, uncouth. It brings unpleasant things to mind: the snobbery of Avery Brundage, the ruthlessness of Richard Nixon. But a distinction must be made between the militaristic personality and a regimental structure on the American scene. The freedom afforded athletes off the field in recent years has not changed the character of the games they play. Imposition, not improvisation, remains the norm. And this is the direction in which soccer had moved before the big mission to America.

Regimented play will also prove a mercy to the camera (construction of stands in labyrinthine patterns could raise mercy to divine proportions by occasioning many a time out). The rhythmic crescendo of soccer may suffer; its sweep, intricacy and continuity may deteriorate. Some would say that a clean and unadulterated experience of the character of soccer would be a tonic to the American imagination. But even they might prefer compromise to neglect. Unless of course systematic soccer were destined to fail anyway. After all, while it can be programmed like football and swift like hockey, it lacks one ingredient that's common to those sports and vital to the American palate: the ability to satisfy a voyeuristic fondness for abrupt and oft-repeated physical trauma.

Michael G. Cooke was an All-American soccer player at Yale before that university promoted him to Professor of English and Master of Trumbull College.

Squash Memories

by Richard M. Dorson

A piece of lemon won me the national intercollegiate squash racquets championship back in 1937. The two-day tournament was being played at the Merion Cricket Club near Philadelphia, and the finalists were Bernie Ridder of Princeton, a six-foot-four powerhouse, and myself, a skinny five-foot-ten retriever from Harvard. We met on the afternoon of the second day after having played a semifinals match that morning and I was frazzled. Squash racquets is a grueling game, requiring the two contestants to chase around a court 25 feet wide and 45 feet long after a little black ball swinging oval-headed racquets. A player loses the point if he hits a strip of tin 17 inches off the floor on the front wall, or hits the ceiling, or fails to strike the ball on the volley or on one bounce. The name of the game is run: up and down from front wall to back and side to side across the court, pivot, rotate, turn, twist, dart, swoop, bend, stretch with the body, and smash, slash, jab, strike, cuddle, loft, block, zing with the racquet arm.

After two days of this I was drained dry, and now it was two-one in Bernie's favor, as we rested for five minutes at the break after three games. Three out of five games wins a match, and the fourth game, let alone a possible fifth, looked to me like a mountain. Bernie had clobbered me in his home court in the Princeton-Harvard match, creasing his slambang serve into the crack off the back wall for a string of winners that had rendered me more an observer than a participant. On this neutral court he was nearly as lethal. While I was thinking these black thoughts, someone pushed a lemon into my hand and and I sucked it. The acidity gave me a surge of energy, and I raced into the fourth game to pick up a quick lead of four or five points, and hung on until I reached the 15 needed to win. Now it was two-all, and if the lemon hype had worn off, at least there was only one last game for the match. We struggled desperately, point by point, Bernie blasting, I scurrying, neither able to command a lead, until the score reached 13-all, whereupon Bernie, the first to make 13, had his choice of two out of three, three out of five, or five out of nine points to end the game and match. He chose the longest option, and we set to work again, flailing, struggling, each straining to hold the center of the court and force his opponent behind him. Being such a big fellow, Bernie presented an obstacle to his adversary, and while I could ask for a "let" if he seemed to block my path to the ball, a let prevented my winning the point, which had to be played over. The score climbed to four-two my favor, and I had three match points to get home. But Bernie won the first, on my serve, and then took the serve himself and the offensive with it to win the second match point and knot the score at two games all, 17 points all, the longest extent to which a squash match can go. So now we both held match point, and Bernie had the momentum. He fired one of his cannonades against the front wall and I managed barely to get my racquet on it as it streaked down the left wall, and to sustain the rally. My strategy was to keep the ball out of the center and away from that murderous forehand. Then suddenly Bernie dumped a relatively easy backhand into the tin, and the match was over.

Squash players have favorite matches they remember and rehearse, to each

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other, for the game is too recondite for general parlor discourse. There are two mysteries here: why the game exerts so powerful an appeal over its buffs, and why it has failed to attract a general collegiate or public following. Although my title was national intercollegiate champion, actually only a dozen colleges, all in the east and most of them Ivy League, then competed, and the situation has not changed much. Squash racquets courts can be found around the country, in college and club gymnasiums, but outside the east it has never developed into a team sport, unfortunately, because it is a fast and exciting game that would add immeasurably to intercollegiate athletics if it were known and played on the same scales as, say, tennis.

There are two drawbacks to the development of squash racquets, one from the spectators' and the other from the players' point of view. As a spectator sport it is severely limited. Perhaps a dozen people can stand and watch from the gallery of an ordinary court, and maybe five times that number can crowd in on seats of a specially fitted grandstand court. Glass-enclosed courts are one expensive way of expanding the audience. From the playing, and to some extent from the viewing, perspective, the chief flaw in the game is the problem of the court hog. Winning the game depends largely on control of the center of the court. The player poised midway between the two side walls and about two-thirds the distance from the front to the back wall dominates the play; he can keep his opponent off balance with volleys and deep down the line and crosscourt shots that send him diving and scrambling toward the back court. Trying to wrest the center from another squash player is somewhat like trying to dislodge a wrestler about to make a pin. Sometimes in his frustration the player in the rear will charge into the one in front and claim a let, or he will not yield enough court space to allow the other to make his swing and so force a let. The court hog, especially if he owns massive buttocks, can straddle the center and defy removal. To counter this situation, the rules state that if the shotmaker hits his opponent with the ball and the ball is clearly going to the front wall, above the tin, that the point belongs to the stroker. This regulation adds insult to injury, the loss of the point plus the red welt. Sometimes in the close quarters racquets will strike bodies, and in a match during my senior year the flick of a backswing that landed on my mouth as I crouched directly behind my opponent trying to take the center from him cost me half of one of my front teeth. In dismay I jumped out of the court and ran all the way back to my room, looked in the mirror at the diminished tooth for a long, disconsolate moment, then returned dejectedly to the court. My opponent, a Boston businessman, made a perfunctory apology—actually it was my fault, I had been playing too close—and proceeded to win the match handily and with no sign of remorse.

Grappling and shoving for the center position does not occur in those racquet and ball games where the opponents are divided by a net: tennis and its siblings, badminton, table tennis, ping pong, platform tennis, paddle tennis, court tennis. Sharing the court and striking the ball against a wall instead of over a net are the principles squash racquets shares with squash tennis, racquets, racquet ball, handball, jai alai. Proficiency in one of these games may or may not lead to proficiency and relish for a sister game. Harvard had the tradition of employing the same coaches for tennis and squash racquets (while in Graduate School I coached both) and some athletes played on both teams, but there were always tennis players who could or would not do squash and squash players with no aptitude for tennis. An argument often heard from tennis players was that squash hurt their game by forcing them into wristy rather than full arm strokes. The rebuttal, to which I subscribed, held that the footwork, eye on the ball concentration, and volleying of squash in the winter carried over to tennis in the spring. In comparing the two sports, I conjure up more thrilling memories in squash than tennis, probably because I could never hit a clean overhead, a fast serve, or a deep volley in tennis. The high moments in squash came from zippy corner shots striking the side and front wall at their intersection and dying in midcourt, touch drop shots nestling just above the tin, slam volleys cutting off the opponent's return after he had raced up front after a corner or drop shot, arched lob serves creasing the side wall just before the receiver could get his racquet on the ball, down the line forehands and backhands hugging the walls so closely the striker had

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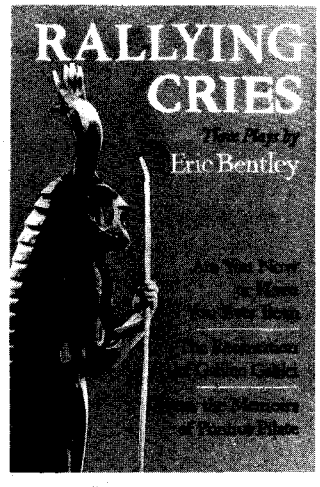

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to scrape the ball off the wall as if it were a sliding pat of butter on a plate. Squash racquets involves continuous motion, acrobatics, surprise, perseverance, ingenuity. No other kindred game I tried gave any comparable rewards. Handball was messy and sloppy; I never had a clean feeling when my hand hit, or half hit the ball. In badminton the elusive shuttlecock floated crazily off my racquet. Squash tennis, similar to squash racquets in the court but played with a larger, livelier ball and a larger, loose strung racquet resembling a snowshoe, seemed to call for little exertion by the players, who waited for the ball to come to them rather than chasing after it. Racquet ball, also played with a lively ball in a handball court with a short-handled racquet, and now enjoying a great boom, appeals to novices because most anyone can play it without worrying about fluency of stroke.

The finest squash racquets player I ever saw was Germaine Greene Glidden, one year preceding me at Exeter and Harvard, but light years ahead of me as a virtuoso of the squash courts. Germaine won not only the national intercollegiate but the national championship his senior year at Harvard, and repeated as national champion the two following years. He was big and sturdy, but lithe and quick, an omnipresence in the court, continually on top of the ball, stabbing at it with his lightning left hand, a cyclone of controlled energy. A favorite shot of his was the boast, a difficult and rarely executed stroke, in which he slapped the ball caroming off the side wall back against that wall at such an angle that it would shoot forward to the opposite side wall and barely feather the front wall, then drop dead on the floor. My greatest excitement at any sports event was watching Glidden playing practice matches with coach Jack Barnaby (just retired after four decades of coaching squash and tennis at Harvard). Jack was slender and springy, with speed and delicacy of touch equal to Germaine's, and the two flashed around the court in a ballet of thrust, riposte, inconceivable gets and streaking wall huggers.

A deep regret of mine is that I never saw any of the Khans from Pakistan play squash racquets. Hashim Kahn, the first of the clan to achieve international fame in the sport, won the British Open Championships seven times, the first in 1950 at the advanced age of 35, the last in 1957. Prince Philip presented the winner's trophy to him in 1955, saying "You are pretty old and you have quite a tummy." Hashim agreed; at five foot four he weighed 140 pounds. A sports writer in the *New Yorker* called him "the greatest athlete for his age the world has ever seen." He learned the game hanging around the British officer's club in Peshawar, a few miles from the village in then northwest India where he grew up. From a ball boy he became a player, then a club professional, then a touring professional. In his 40s he won the Australian, Canadian, and United States Open championships, and at 48 earned the American professional and open titles. Since the American game is played with a harder ball, in a narrower court, Hashim adapted to it readily as he did not need to run so fast as on the English court. In 1960 he accepted an invitation to become professional at the Detroit Uptown Athletic Club. Hashim's account of his career, and his tips on squash, published by the Wayne State University Press in Detroit in 1967 as *Squash Racquets, the Kahn Game*, is surely one of the most refreshing books ever written—talked would be more accurate—on any sport. It conveys Hashim's style of Indian English as well as his style of play. "How can player know where opponent has idea to send ball before hit of racquet? . . . Watch whole man . . . watch racquet or wrist . . . you catch idea *where* ball goes, *how fast*, maybe half second before hit . . . Yes, now you know where to go for reply, but you do not jump to this place in one instant. Body does not want to move like this, it takes time. Like big heavy door, it does not move in instant, first you push, then it begins to open." Most instructional books and manuals about competitive sports read like stockholders reports, but Hashim Kahn's is full of flavor, humor, and very good squash racquets sense. In his entire playing career, he reports, he was never hit by a ball, because he anticipated the coming shot, but he himself hit a number of players, since he concentrated on his shot rather than watched them and they failed to anticipate his returns in time to get out of the ball's path.

Squash is mostly a nostalgic love to me now, though I still play once in a while in a big barnlike handball court here in Bloomington, Indiana. And what was the worth of all those years, from 14 on, spent inside a squash court, seven years of school and college team play, four more as coach in graduate school, and intermittent pick-up games during the professorial scene since? On the level of continuing exercise and physical fitness, one can make a pretty good case for squash racquets. In half an hour the sedentary business or professional type can get an exhausting but exhilarating workout. A close college friend of mine whom I had never known to play the game during our salad years plays every day now at a club in Washington, DC and looks fine and trim in his early 60s. Pummeling that ball inside four walls is a great release from office tensions. But there is also a transfer of value from the sport to the outside arena. The discipline of concentration, the zest for competition, the flow of energy carry over into other pursuits. One learns to fight for the center, and not to hog it if he makes a bum shot. He may get raked in the backside.

Richard M. Dorson, Distinguished Professor of History and Folklore at Indiana University, can also beat most people at tennis.

Defensive Golf

by Timothy Gunn

The world can be divided between those few who love golf and all the rest who are suspicious of them. To its enthusiasts, golf is an esthetic as well as an athletic experience; played in a natural, often spectacularly beautiful environment, the sport demands intelligence, coordination and intense concentration. To its detractors golf is an absurd, elitist non-sport enjoyed mostly by endomorphs compelled to waste money and entire weekend afternoons. I want

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to discuss the game in the light of the principal complaints against it.

Golf is not a physical sport. True. A svelte physique is unnecessary, as evidenced by the professional success of Miller Barber, Julius Boros, Billy Casper, Bob Murphy and the pre-Golden Bear "Fat Jack" Nicklaus. Golf does not require, nor will it develop, much in the way of strength, speed, stamina, or an efficient cardiovascular system. Golfers can accumulate a respectable total of aerobic points only if they play with the fervor of North Platte's famed Dick Kimbrough who completed 364 holes in one 24-hour period (a record) and played an entire round of 18 holes in 30 minutes, 10 seconds (another record). It goes without saying that golfing purists, as well as caddies, tend to find this pace unacceptable.

Golf is for masochists. True, though I prefer the term "perfectionist," for golf aims at an unrealizable perfection from which all fall short. Shooting a 68 in golf is like pitching a two-hitter in baseball or scoring 30 points in basketball—a reason, one would think, for satisfaction if not rejoicing. The comments of Tom Watson (this year's Master's winner) in a recent issue of *Sports Illustrated* demonstrate golfers' typical fussiness: "It's neat. It's neat to hit a good shot, a shot you really like. Today I shot a 68, and I hit one neat shot. A wedge."

The language of golf is itself an indication of the game's unperfectability; it is a lexicon of disaster where words are coined only to describe mistakes. Significantly, in a game where jargon predominates, good shots are described with bland literalness—Watson's "neat shot," for example. Errant shots, on the other hand, are described more exotically. Like the Eskimos who use a dozen words to describe snow (infinitely various yet everpresent), golfers have as many ways to describe a golfball incorrectly struck: from the minor imperfections of the draw, push and pull, through the more serious deviations of the slice and hook, to the esthetic horrors of the banana ball, duck-hook and shank.

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Aspiring golfers try zealously to close the gap between ineptitude and perfection. More hours of professional instruction are given in golf than any other sport. Certainly golf has no rival in the number of instructional manuals published, all seeming to require a knowledge of anatomy equivalent to that of a second-year medical student (the squeamish should skip the mandatory illustration of the club-wielding skinless man whose exposed muscles demonstrate the effect of "proper hip turn"). For those despairing of the benefits of practice and professional advice, there is the peculiarly American tradition of fulfillment-by-mail-order, the quick-fix solution delivered COD where the Tru-Line Turfmat, the Slice Corrector, the Exact-A-Tee, the Super Stick, and the 40,000 Mile Golf Shoe (results guaranteed!) offer an easy transcendence of one's abilities.

Golf is an elitist sport. Once true. Golf's introduction to the United States was made with little sensitivity to any democratic idea; reserved for the upper class, the sport was built on the backs of the lower. Herbert Warren Wind's unintentionally ironic description of America's first course "that looked like a golf course" reads like a capsule history of the worst features of westward expansion: Willie Dunn, a young Scottish golf professional and architect, "arrived in America in March 1891, and set to work almost at once transforming 4000 acres along Great Peconic Bay into a 12-hole golf course. With a crew of 150 Indians from the nearby Shinnecock reservation and a few horse-drawn roadscrapers, Dunn cleared the fairways, removed the blueberry bushes from the rough and utilized the Indian burial mounds as obstacles before the greens or made them into sandtraps. By June, in spite of his unskilled help . . . Willie Dunn had finished his job, and Southampton had a seaside links of which it could be proud."

Well into this century, golf persisted as a symbol of privilege, wealth, success and exclusivity. In F. Scott Fitzgerald's "Winter Dreams," Dexter Green, the young-man-on-the-make who "wanted not association with glittering things and glittering people—he wanted the glittering things themselves," uses golf as an entry into that exclusive and intensely desired world. Like Julien Sorel who was born too late to wear the red of the Napoleonic army and chose instead the black robes of the cleric as his strategy of invading high society, Green calculatedly transcends his middle class origins by seizing the means made available by the culture. His possession of the "glittering things," however transitory and finally dissatisfying, is made possible not only by the green of his accumulated cash but also by his admission onto the green fairways of the local country club.

Likewise, Sinclair Lewis's Babbitt incorporates golf into his strategy of upward mobility. In his indefatigably practical way, Babbitt catalogues his claims to "esthetic and sensitive breeding": "he was a college graduate, he played golf, he often smoked cigarettes instead of cigars, and when he went to Chicago he took a room with a private bath."

Times have changed, of course. Due largely to its increasingly wide exposure on television in the '50s and '60s golf has been embraced as a middle class sport; it is affordable and publicly available. In the San Diego area alone, for example, there are 67 courses, only five of which are restricted to private membership.

The surest indication that golf has been assimilated into the broad middle of American culture is the number of professional golfers who appear on television to endorse products—and not just Maxfli golf balls, MacGregor irons or other golfing paraphernalia. Lee Trevino drinks Dr. Pepper, Arnold Palmer drives a Cadillac, Johnny Miller sports Sears leisure suits, and Jack Nicklaus flashes American Express credit cards. When Nicklaus asks us, "Do you know *me*?" you can bet there is a Madison Avenue executive who knows exactly how many of us do, and is excited by the prospect.

In short, the game has been all but devalued as a symbol of upper-class breeding and as a pretension to privilege. Golf, like a private bath in Chicago and a college education, just doesn't mean as much as it used to.

Golf is an absurd sport. True. What could be more preposterous than a game the object of which is to hit a ball into a small hole in the ground? What indeed, unless it's a game where one hits a ball over a fence, or against a wall, or back and forth across a net, or slam-dunks one through a hoop? Golf's inherent inanity puts it in the good company of all other games, for after all, that's what makes a game a game—its purposeful

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departure from reality. Identifying games as "utterly useless activities," Christopher Lasch has it exactly right: "They recreate the freedom, the remembered perfection of childhood and mark it off from ordinary life with artificial boundaries, within which the only constraints are the rules to which the players freely submit." Golf is no more or less absurd than the other sports I play, but its leisurely, sometimes even meditative, pace allows me to ponder that absurdity and to reflect upon—usually with delight—how unlike the rest of my existence this wonderfully bizarre game really is.

Playing at Torrey Pines a few years ago, I was paired with an elderly gentleman, John Williams, a character actor once nominated for an academy award for *Dial M For Murder*. The round went uneventfully until we neared the 18th green and discovered a man in the foursome ahead, quite dead, in the middle of the fairway. My partner's response was one of anger that he couldn't hit straight for the green, that he had to chip around the body.

Now that's a golfer.

Timothy Gunn is an officer of the National Endowment for the Humanities on afternoons too cold for golf.

The Moral Equivalent to Football

by Wilcomb E. Washburn

Americans, from William James to Jimmy Carter, have been searching for a "moral equivalent to war": some commitment to high purpose which benefits mankind yet evokes the same degree of discipline and self-sacrifice that war does. Because the vision of such a state is so attractive it has figured rhetorically in the expressions of many presidents, most notably Teddy Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, Franklin D. Roosevelt, John F. Kennedy, Lyndon B. Johnson and Mr. Carter. But in all cases, the ideal seems rarely to have been incorporated in reality: only a mocking echo remains of the countless calls to make the world "safe for democracy," to create a "Great Society," or to make "any sacrifice" to defend "liberty" around the world. It hardly seems likely that the American people will find saving energy any more inspiring an ideal or that they will voluntarily sacrifice to the extent necessary to turn this latest ideal into a reality.

While all efforts to transfer the values of discipline, sacrifice, and courage from warlike to peaceful pursuits seem fruitless, there is one area in which this transfer has been successfully made. That area is sports, and in particular the sport of football as it is played in America from the high school to the professional level. But while most of the values and many of the strategies of war can be transferred directly to the game of football (at a tiny fraction of the cost in killed and wounded), most intellectuals would deny that the game serves any moral or even useful purpose. Football is variously discussed by intellectuals under the heading of amusement, recreation, business, or mayhem. Those identified with the game, such as Gerald Ford as a player, or Richard Nixon as a fan, are pitied for having played the game too long without a helmet or for being unable to distinguish right from wrong.

Criticism of America's preoccupation with football runs the gamut from Senator Eugene McCarthy's comment that a football coach is a man smart enough to be able to get his team motivated for the game, and dumb enough to think that it is important; to Henry Steele Commager's reaction to a reporter's question of the importance of the National Football League in American history (the subject of an NFL essay contest for boys and girls). "You can describe it in five words," Commager responded. "It has no importance whatsoever." Commager at least knew what the NFL was. Many of the other historians queried by reporters had never heard of the organization. Almost all intellectuals would, with Christopher Lasch, in a recent issue of the *New York Review of Books* (April 28, 1977), deplore football as one of the games which enlist "skill and intelligence, the utmost concentration of purpose, on behalf of utterly useless activities, . . ."

I must take issue with my friends and colleagues in the historical profession who can see little connection between football and American history. Any activity which engages not only the *numbers* of individuals who play and watch football, but the *intensity* of their commitment, deserves study. The game of football is a better barometer of American character than any other aspect of our culture because it reflects the true—and not the ideal—nature of our people. The brutality and insensitivity (along with the courage and intelligence) that characterize the game are integral parts of our national character. A game which recognizes and utilizes these characteristics is more consistent with our actual nature than one which appeals to our "better" nature.

In both war and football, however unjust and immoral it may seem, "there is no substitute for victory." The link between the two activities is well stated in a quotation from General Douglas MacArthur inscribed upon the walls of the gymnasium at West Point: "Upon the fields of friendly strife are sown the seeds that, upon other fields, on other days, will bear the fruits of victory." The intensity of feeling about winning in war and football is derived from the knowledge (of those in charge) that success and failure is often measured in inches, in the chance bounce of a ball, or in the temporary attitude of the contestants. In the military the fate of a battle and of a nation turn on the want of a nail for the shoe of the horse. In football too it is the single missed assignment, the single chance operation of fate, that spells the difference between winning and losing. No wonder coaches insist on drilling their players and organizing their resources to minimize the workings of chance and any other factor that can affect the outcome of the game. Spectators show an equivalent concern with excellence of performance. As Norman Podhoretz has noted, "excellence is relatively uncontroversial as a judgment of performance" in sports, and is applied by an audience which tends to be more sophisticated in determining excellence than the theatergoer or concert listener.

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The "commercialization and functional rationalization of college football" developed at Yale University in the last quarter of the 19th century and the early decades of the 20th century, as two sociologists, David L. Wesby and Allen Sack, have observed in a recent issue of the *Journal of Higher Education*. The hallmarks of this movement, initiated under the guidance of Walter Camp, Yale's coach, were and continue to be, centralized authority and decision making in a single man, the coach; a high degree of specialization and task differentiation (line coaches, platoon systems, kicking specialists, etc.); systematic recruitment; collection and analysis of masses of information about one's own and one's opponent's players; invention of new strategies; and comprehensive control over the players' life activities (training tables, bed checks, etc.). All these aspects of the modern game of football developed at Yale rather than at Harvard, the other school which adapted to American conditions English-style rugby football (in which the ball is carried rather than kicked). Camp, a self-made businessman, possessed the same intense desire to win and achieve that characterized the newly rich industrialists, railroad presidents and bankers who moved into positions on Yale's Board of Successor Trustees in the same period. Meanwhile the Fellows of the Harvard Corporation continued to be drawn almost entirely from the patrician class of Boston Brahmins, their philosophy expressed by President Charles W. Eliot who, in referring to his participation in a 1858 crew meet, said, "I had rather win than not, but it is mighty little matter whether we beat or are beaten—rowing is not my profession, neither is it my love—it is only recreation, fun and health."

Just as football has evolved in accordance with the evolving business ethic of American society, so has it evolved in accordance with the changing strategic assumptions about war. The development (or rebirth) of the T-formation in football coincided almost exactly with the development of a new era of mobility and speed in warfare best exemplified in the Blitzkrieg tactics of the German armies in Europe in 1939-40. The T-formation soon overwhelmed the "Maginot Line" mentality of traditional football, based as it was on rigid lines and massive concentrations of defensive and offensive power. While the single-wing formation prevalent before the war (and during the early stages of the war) telegraphed ahead the point of attack and minimized the possibilities for deception, the T-formation (and some of its variations) allowed the quarterback, standing immediately behind the center, to whirl in any direction and hand off the football to any of three backs who sought to penetrate the "line" at any point along its length. Only a quick opening provided by the offensive linemen was necessary to spring the running back into the "secondary" defenses of the opponent. No longer did the offensive line have to rely so much on "double-teaming" an opposing lineman or holding a block until the running back coming at an angle to the line was able to penetrate the principal line of defense. All that was necessary for the T-formation runner to clear the line was a stand-up block by an offensive lineman and a split second. The result was understandably widespread adoption of the T-formation and the creation of defenses in depth to counter its effects. Instead of a six- or seven-man line with one or two linebackers, coaches created defenses in depth with four- or five-man lines and three or four linebackers, as well as installing looping, slanting, and other complex defensive movements for the linemen.

Football also reflects the American preoccupation with time and its organization. Unlike baseball, tennis and some other sports, football is played within the rigid limitations of a precise time frame. Games cannot go on forever as they can (theoretically) in baseball. One must constantly calculate the time available in terms of its amount and value at any particular moment in relation to one's opponent. No characteristic of American society differentiates us more clearly from Oriental and American Indian societies than this active manipulation (rather than passive acceptance) of time. Whether we are "making" time or "wasting" time in everyday matters, or engaged in a "two-minute drill" to score as the clock is "running" down, the consciousness of our acting *upon* rather than *within* time is nowhere more clearly impressed upon us than in football.

Football has until recently been exclusively an outdoor sport open to the elements. The carefully manicured grass field where football and baseball are played has been compared to a natural "arena in which men can become heroes." It is the American West encapsulated as an oasis in an urban landscape, a "vestigial remnant of the rural landscape" for which we all subconsciously long. With the introduction of domed stadia like the Astrodome in Houston, the link to nature has been all but severed. The Astroturf carpet is painted green and looks like grass. The plexiglass dome faintly resembles the sky. But both player and spectator have been cut off from the ties to the sun and earth which echo the ancient act of natural survival from which the modern game evolved. Both players and spectators are in danger of becoming part of an entertainment industry: the players serving as objects for spectator amusement rather than standing as "champions" linked with their constituencies in a human bond of love or hate.

Whether the use of the domed stadia, artificial turf, and constant room temperature (the term "synthetic era of American sport" coined by Michael Oriard is an appropriate characterization of the phenomenon) will change the character of American football is uncertain. Judge Hofheinz, creator of the Astrodome, envisaged baseball changing from a rowdy spectacle to comfortable entertainment emotionally detached from the passions of the fans. Certainly the purist will lament the absence of blinding snow storms, swirling dust or numbing cold which have characterized some of the great football playoff games of the past, even if experienced vicariously through the medium of television. Who can forget the first overtime playoff game in the National Football League between the Baltimore Colts and the New York Giants in 1958? Or some of the early Green Bay Packer championship games on the frozen fields of northern Wisconsin? Perhaps the reason recent Super Bowl games have tended to fall flat has been the attempt to produce as entertainment in a pleasant controlled environment what should essentially be a test of physical survival against a hostile environment as well as a hostile foe. Perhaps our national character is being changed imperceptibly by settings which insulate football from nature and make it an indoor game. I fear for its longtime effects.

It might be argued that football

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suffers as an exemplar of national values because it is almost exclusively a male concern. Of all sports in which women engage, women compete least effectively with men in football. This is not only because women lack the necessary size, strength and speed which are so essential to the game as played by men, but because women have not been as fully indoctrinated into the tradition of winning (with its anguished corollary of losing) as have men. Sports for women have rested heavily upon values of recreation rather than of competition, though that emphasis has been changing rapidly in recent times.

But one can counter the objection by asserting that football represents the true and not the ideal American character. To the extent that American national character is male and chauvinistic, football reflects that character. Women are relegated to cheerleader roles, admiring the efforts of males, but not challenging their exclusively male preoccupation with defeating their opponents. Even the taboos on sexual contact for athletes in the period immediately prior to a game reflect the primitive concern with male contamination by women characteristic of tribal societies, particularly during periods of military adventures. In the world of football and of men oriented to its values, the woman can support, either by her presence or absence, male values; she can never fully participate, or impose contrary values.

The idyllic society of gentlemen who engage in sport for recreation exalted by President Eliot of Harvard no longer exists. The rationalization and commercialization of the game, introduced by Camp at Yale, has become accepted virtually without question in American society. Just as the new organization of football in the late 19th and early 20th centuries reflected the values of the growing commercial and industrial leadership of the country at that time, so does present-day football reflect the even more specialized and complex economic and political organization of our country today. This is not to say that there is no dissent from prevailing values. Just as a significant minority of the American people expressed vociferously its disillusionment with American involvement in the Vietnam war, so have there been voices of dissent from the prevailing acceptance of the values of contemporary football. Dave Meggyesy of the St. Louis Cardinals may stand as an example of that dissent. In his book *Out of Their League*, he has written of his growing disillusionment at the "dehumanization" characteristic of professional football: its casual cruelty and commitment to winning at all costs. But Meggyesy remains an exception to the prevailing acceptance of the values of football—dehumanizing and cruel as they may be—in our society.

More positively, one can argue that football in particular (and sports in general) is the great entering wedge of the "meritocracy" that has erased the distinction between upper and lower classes, between blacks and whites, and between professionals and amateurs. School football as well as professional football not only integrates players of different race and social class backgrounds, but also integrates diverse elements of both school and society. It achieves this end by the application of the same values which, when distorted, lead to the dehumanization that Meggyesy speaks of. The commitment to win becomes so great that all other values are subordinated to it: friendship, racial preferences, even medical caution. The unity established in football may crumble in defeat or in recrimination, but so does the unity established in war or in other human pursuits.

Football, to repeat, is not a pastime in our society. It is a profession, whether one is paid in dollars or in admiration. In our society the football player is paid in both. There has always been, and I hope will continue to be, a place in our society for those who detest the values of football (and of war) or who, like some of my historian friends, are unaware that such values exist or that they can be taken seriously. But their position is

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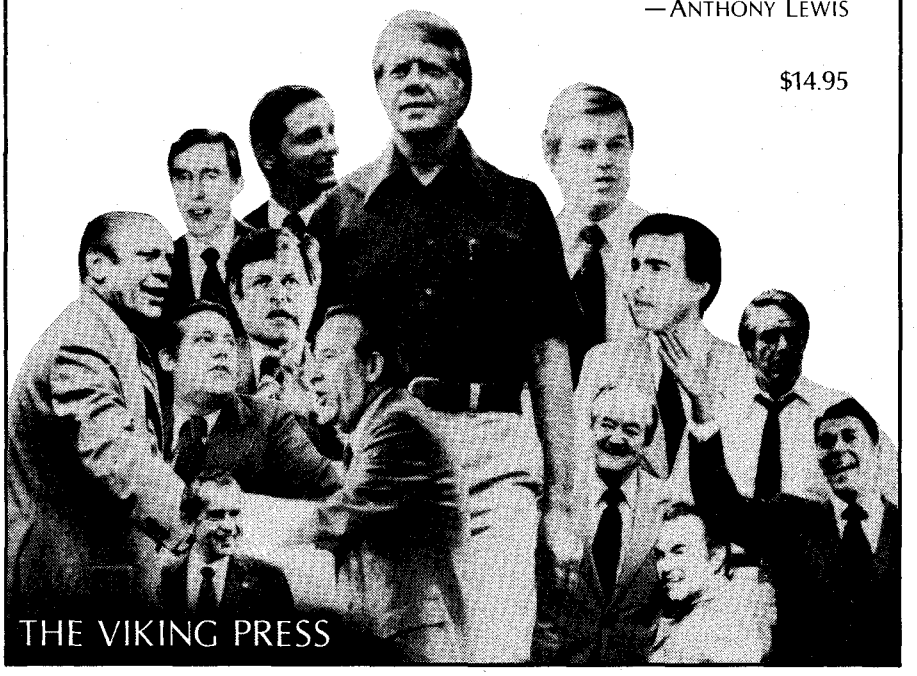

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philosophical or moral, not historical or scientific. As an observer of my society—as a historian—I see a general acceptance of the values of controlled physical violence in our society, expressed most clearly in the approbation and support of football at all levels. It may not be the moral equivalent of war, but it is an equivalent that satisfies the majority of the American people.

Wilcomb E. Washburn, director of the Office of American Studies at the Smithsonian Institution, played first string tackle at Dartmouth in the days when Dartmouth played Notre Dame.

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Correspondence, *from page 2*

In praise of general aviation

To the editors:

To answer the rhetorical question in your editor's reply in the letters column of the June 11 issue, no, private aircraft are not the place to start in conserving fuel.

The airlines serve a total of 417 of the country's 13,000 airports. It is wasteful to use a large aircraft—on a scheduled basis—to serve the majority of the communities. Scheduling a large airplane into an airport for two, three, or frequently even *no* passengers, would waste far more fuel than the on-demand operations of the small private airplane.

In total operations, general aviation uses less than six percent of the aviation fuel. If the airlines had to serve every one of the 13,000 places where general aviation can and does go, they would spill more than that in their refueling.

Instead of wasting fuel as your comment suggests, general aviation conserves fuel by helping to avoid unproductive flights of scheduled airlines.

Max Karant
Senior Vice President
Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association

Scientific Luddites

To the editors:

J. D. Watson and *TNR* are to be congratulated for the June 25th article on research in molecular biology ("In Defense of DNA"). More balanced, clear-headed statements of this sort are clearly needed in influential publications in order to halt the pernicious transformation of the biosciences into political science—or worse, into politics. The Laetrile and Saccharine enthusiasts are but one indication of a troubled, ignorant society in the midst of a biological revolution.

Our society is biologically ignorant. It is all too easy for misguided scientists and science writers to concoct microscopic monsters behind every test tube, and most people fail to understand the most basic of biological concepts.

I seriously doubt that the breeders of Seattle Slew worried about "tampering with evolution"; why then such hysteria about the work of recombinant DNA researchers?

Dean R. Lambe
Vincent, Ohio

TRB, *from inside cover*

ping on domestic telephone calls (through instruments housed in a shack atop their Embassy here) is an act of aggression. Senator Moynihan of New York, a charming headline grabber, is rather a thorn in the flesh of the President, I imagine, and he got the back of the hand in this instance as Carter suavely recalled that Pat had been a former high-up officer of the Nixon Administration (in point of fact, Counsellor to the President).

There seems little chance that America and Russia can reach agreement in time to continue the SALT treaty which otherwise expires October 2. Meanwhile the arms race has ratcheted up another notch with prospective US introduction of the Neutron Bomb riding a cruise missile. The N-bomb is an "enhanced radiation warhead" snidely described here by Democrats as a "Republican bomb" because it kills people and spares property. Development of a smaller, tactical battlefield weapon that doesn't blow up whole cities means the chances are greater that hostile armies will cross what James Schlesinger calls the "nuclear firebrake" and use atom weapons.

The strangest aspect of modern nuclear confrontation is the business of psychoanalysing the enemy: what force of bomb-power must you present to deter the enemy from using his? War colleges prepare million-dollar psychic gameplans of "credibility." If the Kremlin knows we have nuclear power to atomize their cities, and the guts to use it, then, the theory is, they won't shoot off their silos. But how can you trust the Russians to obey the theory? Now comes Harvard professor Richard Pipes, distinguished Kremlinologist, who throws the whole discussion to confustion: Russians have a "peasant" mentality he says: they will accept millions of deaths, they are too damn dumb to be deterred. It is the metaphysics of madness.

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Washington Diarist

Bourgeois Afflictions

I am not generally paranoid, only specifically so. For example, Ralph Nader and my wife are convinced that most of the works of man, and some of nature, are crawling with cancer germs, but that doesn't bother me much. The Great Washer-Plumber Conspiracy does. Every time a faucet leaks and I try to fix it, none of the 17 boxes of assorted washers I have bought over the years contains a single washer of the right size, and I have to call a plumber, who insists he has no washers for sale on his premises, and says he will have to come and inspect. He does, rummages through his tool box, returns at least once to his shop, of course, then comes back to my house with a washer and charges $40 to install it. I am convinced that washer manufacturers are in cahoots with the plumbing industry, and that there simply are no washers on sale at ordinary stores that fit any faucet manufactured in America, the right ones being furnished by secret agreement exclusively to plumbers.

I also have a thing about Blue Cross. I am morally certain that thorough investigation will uncover a top secret memo circulated throughout the Blue Cross system, euphemistically titled "Reducing Claim Costs," suggesting techniques such as automatically throwing away every claimant's initial submission for reimbursement; sending each claim applicant at least four requests for additional information; and offering rewards to Blue Cross employees who find new ways to delay payments, frustrate policyholders into paying their own bills or justify disallowing ordinary medical expenses as not within Blue Cross specifications. I developed this paranoia when my second child was born and Blue Cross was still requesting information about the birth of my first. No experience with Blue Cross since then has cured me.

But Blue Cross and plumbers do not begin to arouse the feelings I harbor about auto mechanics. Besides wrenching and grinding, I am convinced every mechanic takes a secret course in sabotage, and an apprentice earns an A if he can repair a car so subtly that the next thing does not go wrong until 50 miles after the owner has driven it out of the shop, thereby keeping the victim coming back, distraught but unaware, for more bleeding. An owner who complains or accuses, of course, gets a coded mark placed on his car's next work sheet, instructing the mechanic to find or cause malfunctions costing $300 or more. This paranoia developed when I angrily demanded better workmanship on my alternator, only to have the car's engine explode a week later in a cloud of black oil. I bought a new car for my wife to use, but I resolved I would ride the bus, and never again be taken by a mechanic.

However I did not reckon on the Washington bus system. It is part of a general transportation system serving the nation's capital which is run by a conspiracy not of avarice, but of imbecility. Except for Boston, no city in America needs so many wooden barriers, flashing lights and orange arrows as makeshift devices to redirect traffic and overcome the errors of highway engineers. In no other city except Boston are expressways as confusing and road markers so inadequate. And not even Boston matches Washington in its penchant for tearing up its streets. I have lived in Washington for 10 years and not for one hour of one day has Connecticut Avenue been intact. Washington's new Metro subway is dazzling, but even here, the geniuses who planned it located stations so that riders must take long, uncomfortable walks to get to the US Capitol and National Airport from their respective Metro stops.

The bus authorities in Washington ostensibly want suburbanites like me to commute by bus. Signs are posted—bearing Jimmy Carter's signature, no less—saying, "Thanks for Riding the Bus and Saving Energy." Yet the scheduling and service from the Maryland suburbs into Washington seem designed to force every would-be bus rider into an automobile. For example, no bus whatever runs from Maryland down Connecticut Avenue into Washington before 7 am, though during angry early morning waits I sometimes count seven, eight or nine buses in a row heading empty into the far suburban wilds. True, express buses zip commuters downtown in 20 minutes starting at 7:30 am, but there are too few such buses, they are invariably packed beyond overflowing when they pass my corner and express service stops at 8:45. Thereafter, the only service available is the Geriatric Special, or Biddy Patrol. This is the L4 local, which makes every single stop on the way downtown, picking up elderly ladies heading for a golden age center or to spend their pension checks at a department store. I have nothing against them personally, but they make my bus take an hour to get me to the office. And hard as I try to hide in a back seat by a window with my head buried in a book, I spend half my ride wondering guiltily if a sweet old lady will need my seat; the rest of the ride, I stand.

Nighttime service finally ripped it, though. After 6:30 pm, buses run only once an hour beyond the DC city limits. I don't mind waiting or just walking home in the summer, but on dark winter nights with the snow flying it arouses my paranoia to watch convoys of buses heading downtown empty while none can be spared to go the other way. It was on one such night, remembering that the subway will not be out my way until 1982, that I decided to go back on my resolve and buy a second car. Defiantly, I decided to name it Metrobus.

So I have bought it. It is a 1966 Ford Falcon, a real classic, and it cost only $400. I took it to be safety inspected, however, and it failed: too much play in the steering wheel. I left it with a mechanic for simple adjustment; but, no, a new gear box is needed, sir, and it will cost $150. In my heart of hearts, I knew no gear box really was needed, just a few turns of a wrench. But I said OK to the work, afraid if I let on to the mechanic what I knew, Metrobus would never get out alive. You might call it paranoia, but I call it prudence.

M.M.K.

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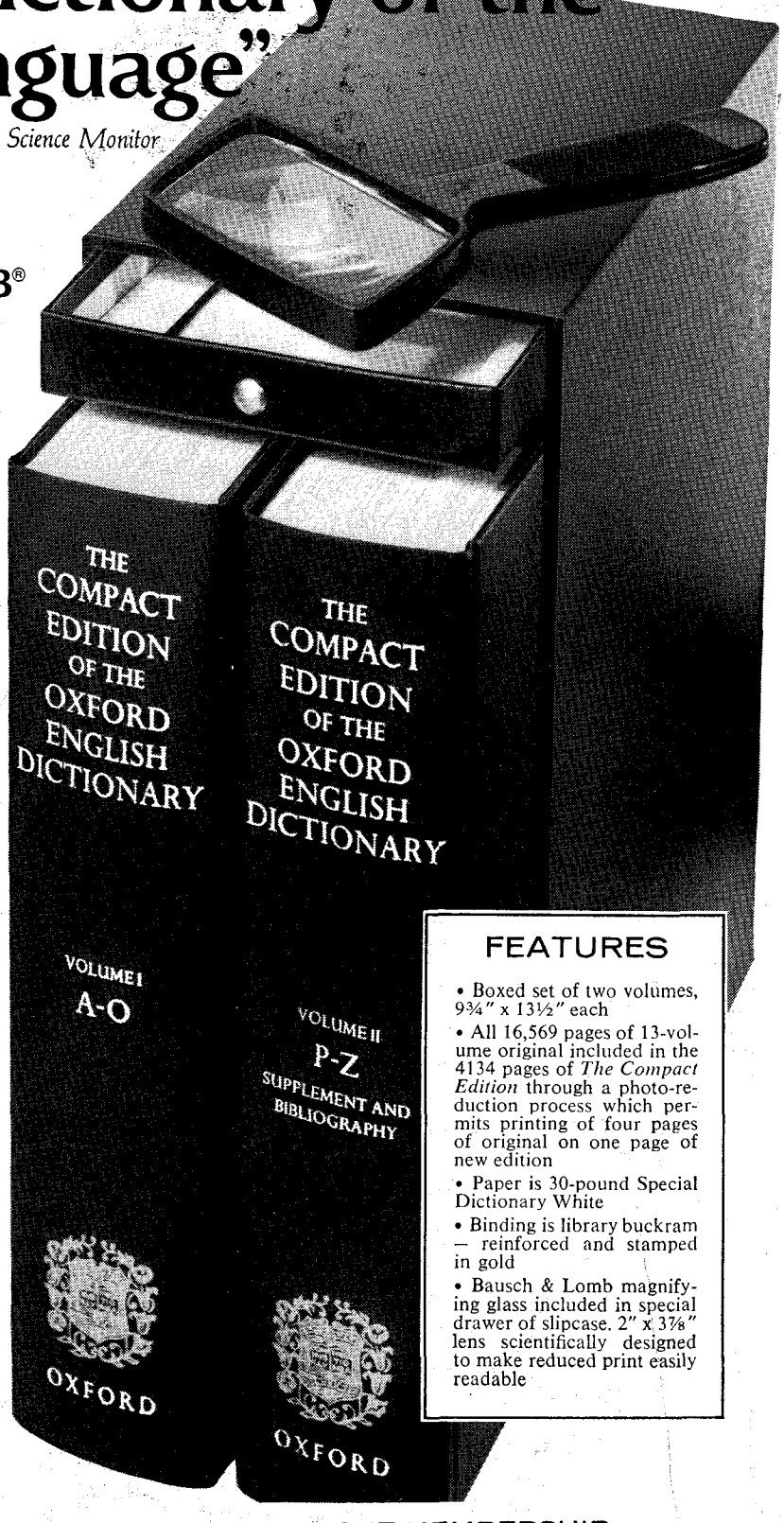

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- You will receive the *Book-of-the-Month Club News,* a literary magazine published by the Club fifteen times a year. The *News* describes the coming Selection and scores of Alternates, and will be sent to you approximately every three and a half weeks.
- If you wish to purchase the Selection, do nothing and it will be shipped to you automatically.
- If you do not want the Selection—or you would like one of the Alternates or no book at all—simply indicate your decision on the reply form always enclosed with the *News* and mail it so we receive it by the date specified.
- If, because of late mail delivery of the *News,* you should receive a Selection without having had 10 days to decide whether you want it, that Selection may be returned at Club expense.
- All books distributed by the Book-of-the-Month Club are identical to the publishers' editions in content, format, size and quality.

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